

THE GRAND TOUR

by

Bruce Gilbert

Based on the novel

"TRINITY'S CHILD"

By

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EXT. HIGHLANDS ABOVE SPOKANE -- WINTER -- LATE AFTERNOON

A vision of a charcoal smudge against banked snow. Reveal the smudge to be a Darth Vader black jeep.

In the jeep, we catch spit-polish black boots pressing the accelerator. We follow up legs covered in fire proofed flight-suit khaki. We hover at a chest neutered by a flight jacket emblazoned with lightning bolts clasped in a mailed fist. We travel past a name tag stenciled: MOREAU, to a moon-man white helmet framing the face of a woman. A fresh scrubbed American face, with beautiful eyes and a wisp of dark hair.

The black jeep whines past us towards the main gate at Fairchild Air Force Base.

CLOSER -- FAIRCHILD MAIN GATE --

A young airman, with only a blue beret to protect him against the morning cold, blows on his hands to keep them warm. He HEARS the high pitched sound of the jeep approaching, smiles as he assumes his proper position at the guard gate.

All business now, the young airman returns MOREAU's salute. As she passes through, she glances in her rear-view mirror and catches the guards barely suppressed smile. Behind him a large sign reads: CAUTION, YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE MOST DANGEROUS AREA IN THE WORLD -- THE AMERICAN HIGHWAY.

EXT. FAIRCHILD AIR FORCE BASE -- WASHINGTON STATE -- DAWN

MOREAU cruises through the base past rows of old barracks, then up along the ridge above the flight line. Below her, stretched out in a line and bathed in surreal pea-soup yellow lights, stand six jungle camouflaged B-52's. Ice mist wisps off their long drooping, nuclear armed wings.

EXT FAIRCHILD ALERT FACILITY -- DAWN --

MOREAU parks her jeep and walks along the barbed wire cyclone fence towards the half buried bunker-like ALERT FACILITY. Her breath misting in the morning cold, she arrives at the first metal gate. A sign reads: DEADLY FORCE AUTHORIZED.

MOREAU walks through the first gate and is momentarily trapped as it closes behind her. A second gate does not open. She is scrutinized, TV cameras whirring, sensors sensing. A loud electronic CLICK and the second gate opens revealing a guard with loose slung M16 on his shoulder, pearl handled pistol on his hip, and a beret. He does not smile.

The guard runs a metal detector up and down the inside of MOREAU's legs. Cleared, she now walks up the ramp towards the facility where she will pull a week of standby nuclear alert duty.

INT. GAME ROOM -- ALERT FACILITY -

EXTREME CLOSEUP -- KAZAKLIS'S FACE

He is intensely concentrating. The eyes however, belie a late night at the bar of the High Pine Lounge from which he has too recently come.

EXTREME CLOSEUP -- KAZAKLIS'S FINGERS -

We HEAR KAZAKLIS's voice send light speed signals to his fingers. We HEAR the electronic blip every time the FIRE button is pushed followed by an electronic explosion sound. The fingers deftly follow each command.

KAZAKLIS (v.o.)

Left ten, fire (blip); left five,
fire (blip); Left five, fire (blip).
Right ten, fire (blip); Right ten,
fire (blip).

CLOSEUP -- SPACE INVADERS ELECTRONIC ARCADE GAME SCREEN

Two more invaders move steadily down towards the bottom of the screen where the electronic spaceship lies in wait.

KAZAKLIS (v.o.)

Left five, fire! Left five, fire
(blip, blip).

INT. GAME ROOM -- ALERT FACILITY

KAZAKLIS pushes back from the controls of the Space Invaders game as it plays a little electronic victory song. He smiles. He is good. He has to be. He is the best pilot and the worst example in the Strategic Air Command.

The game room looks like early Holiday Inn. Cinder-block walls, pool tables, card tables, chairs and sofas. A window framed with curtains that, upon closer examination, is not a real window at all but merely a realistic mural of a desert scene drawn in 3-D perspective.

MOREAU enters with a rolled up flight plan map and sits down next to HALUPALAI, the big Hawaiian tail gunner, the oldest of the crew and the only NCO. Halupalai is staring off into space, out the fake desert window.

Moreau spreads a flight plan map on the card table. It shows a B-52 heading north toward Russia. Then it makes a sudden loop and a bee-line for Tahiti.

MOREAU

Well...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HALUPALAI

Tahiti's now a strategic target,
Captain?

MOREAU

I thought it would make an
interesting conversation piece the
next time the base commander brings
a visiting Senator by.

HALUPALAI

(laughs) Only you could get away with
that.

Moreau looks at Kazaklis who is back playing Space Invaders. His
butt sways left then right; he is whistling "America the Beautiful".
Moreau turns back to Halupalai and gives him a wicked grin. She
rolls up her map and walks up behind Kazaklis. She pauses. His butt
is still swaying left and right and he's whistling "...for amber
waves of grain.."

MOREAU

Captain...

KAZAKLIS

Not now Moreau.

Another pause. The butt still swaying to the rhythm of the machine.
The whistling even louder. Then in quick cuts:

- She jams her rolled up map between Kazaklis' legs.
- The green alien adversary on the screen lets go with a blast.
- Kazaklis explodes simultaneously with the machine.

KAZAKLIS

She-e-e-e-it

The video screen flashes: GAME OVER, GAME OVER, GAME OVER...

EXT. CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN -- COLORADO -- DUSK

We are high OVERLOOKING skiers schussing down powdery slopes. A
title appears: NORAD : CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN, COLORADO. As it
disappears we move DOWN. DOWN past the skiers, into the snow. DOWN,
DOWN, DOWN into the mountain's bowels. Continuing down we emerge
into a dank tunnel whose black walls weep moisture.

INT. CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN -- TUNNEL

We come to rest behind a GENERAL who is standing in wait for a 25
ton steel door to finish opening. The General begins to move forward
towards a Styxian city and we move with him.

INT. CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN -- COMMAND BALCONY AND OPERATIONS ROOM

The General emerges onto the glassed-in command balcony overlooking a room filled with men peering into green screens.

The screens are powered by computers linked to orbiting satellites. The satellites are tuned to Russian Steppes as well as to silent rectangular boxes which represent yankee class soviet submarines that have been tracked under the seas.

There are many clocks in the room tuned to Moscow, Omaha, Plesetsk, Kapustin Yar, Washington, and the universal time of Zulu (Greenwich meantime)

There are signs that ask: ARE YOU EWO READY? And there are alert codes that read in order of readiness: APPLE JACK, LEMON JUICE, SNOWMAN, BIG NOISE, COCKED PISTOL, FAST PACE, ROUND HOUSE, DOUBLE TAKE, FADE OUT.

Watching all the watchers watching, stands the General. Below him a CANADIAN RAF OFFICER fiddles with his screen that has boxed the rough location of a soviet sub 175 miles off the coast of Neah Bay, Washington. On the sound of a blip we go to:

INT. ALERT FACILITY -- MOREAU'S DORM ROOM -- FAIRCHILD AFB--

The door opens revealing a medieval chastity belt stretched across it as Moreau enters. Sprawled across the second of two bunks is a woman tanker pilot doing a crossword puzzle.

MOREAU

...Hi

ROOMMATE

...Hmmm.

Moreau crosses to her bunk and begins to unroll and tack up the flight plan map we saw her with earlier. After a moment the roommate looks up from her crossword puzzle.

ROOMMATE

You know, you're really pushing it, Moreau.

Moreau continues tacking up her map, paying no attention. The Roommate stands now, annoyed.

ROOMMATE

OK, if the map goes up then that (pointing) has got to come down.

The roommate is pointing a mock centerfold of EDWARD TELLER in living color with a small photograph of a mushroom cloud planted squarely between his scrawny legs.

MOREAU

What have you got against the ultimate climax dear?

INT. CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN -- COMMAND BALCONY AND OPERATIONS ROOM

The young RAF officer is tapping his screen in agitation. Three more blips have appeared from the same zone off Neah Bay. Next to him a young AMERICAN LIEUTENANT watches in fascination, distracted from his own screen.

Blip. Suddenly out of the corner of his eye he catches a spasm appear on his own screen which is trained on a patch of ocean in the Georgia Banks off New England.

Blip. On another screen more blips appear off North Carolina and on another a stacatto blip appears in the Pacific beyond Catalina in Southern California.

The general watches patiently from above. He pushes a button changing the alert code from APPLE JACK to LEMON JUICE. He starts to reach for a phone, then draws back.

GENERAL

(to Aide) Check and make sure
someone hasn't slipped a training
tape into the main computer bank.

Another computer screen and a watcher is flipping his screen on and off, then pulling the picture in tight for magnification. The screen shows flexing molars like computer game aliens near Plesetsk in the arctic north of Moscow. The words SILO DOORS OPENING flash in a corner of the screen.

The General flicks the alert code from LEMON JUICE to SNOW MAN as you really begin to feel the electricity.

AIDE

There is no training tape in the
computer, sir.

The General reaches to his right to pick up the direct line phone.

GENERAL

I'm calling SAC headquarters.

INT. LIBRARY -- ALERT FACILITY -- FAIRCHILD AFB --

The library is cramped and overheated. ARE YOU EWO READY? signs are here too. TYLER, a 28 year old navigator is upset and preoccupied, yet still trying to comprehend the complexities of David Stockman's "The Supply Side of Economics". TYLER stares off into the bright white light of the bulb on the desk lamp which becomes:

EXT. ALERT FACILITY ANNEX -- FAIRCHILD AFB -- DAY --

Winter white snow and then: Swings, a jungle gym and a slide. We see Tyler playing with his three year old son. Tyler's wife comes into the scene. She must reluctantly take the child and go. Tyler looks after them for a moment then turns toward the Alert Facility.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The mother suddenly screams. Tyler turns to see his boy running towards him. Tyler angrily places his hands on his hips.

The boy freezes uncertainly. He turns to see his mother racing after him. The boy bolts away from both parents towards the drooping wings of the B-52's.

The boy slips on the frozen tarmac and skids near a wheel. The mother is running after him. WHOMP. She falls hard. The air rushes out of her, a foot is placed firmly on her back, a riot gun inches from her head. A second white form does the same to the child. They are the security patrol in winter white camouflage suits. They have appeared from nowhere.

Tyler understands and moves slowly towards them.

TYLER

...Cottonmouth.

The foot comes off the boy first. The woman more slowly. Tyler picks up the boy and spanks him. The boy's eyes fill with tears. Tyler hands him back to his mother and says tonelessly:

TYLER

You do not go near the bombs.

His wife's stricken eyes say nothing and everything.

INT. LIBRARY -- ALERT FACILITY -- FAIRCHILD AFB

CLOSE ON Tyler's eyes a little tear near one corner. He looks back at his textbook and tries to concentrate again.

INT. SAC HEADQUARTERS -- OMAHA

A SAC four star Air Force GENERAL (GENERAL BLUE) cradles a phone. He is listening to the two star General from Cheyenne but as we watch, the light on his face changes from white fluorescent to pale luminous blue. Red lights like tracer bullets race across his forehead.

BLUE GENERAL

Okay, I've put us on a combat footing. Let's scramble the fighters to take a look-see.

We now begin to REVEAL the command balcony at SAC headquarters, The General hangs up the phone. He sits in an overstuffed leather chair in front of other phones and buttons. Below are some smaller screens like at Cheyenne but the room is dominated by six 16' x 16' screens at eye level with the command balcony. The General jabs at some controls.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BLUE GENERAL

Let's get the big picture up there.

The main screen flutters briefly in a televideo snowstorm and then up pops a large polar map looking down on the northern hemisphere. The other screens show our missile installations, B-52 bases, and navy subs. The General shudders. On the center screen, out of the flexing molars near PLESETSK come snaking white lines with computer projections of missiles. All of them cross American coast lines. The General moves the status from SNOWMAN to BIG NOISE.

BLUE GENERAL

We're going from preliminary attack conference to attack conference. Get RSIOP off line. I want the SIOP computer concentrating solely on this problem -- Now!

The General now reaches for a grungy yellow phone.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITTING ROOM/SAC HEADQUARTERS -- INTERCUT

A man in bathrobe and pajamas is asleep in an antique wing back chair. A re-run of Mission Impossible plays on the TV. In a groggy and slurred voice the man answers.

PRESIDENT

...Yes?

BLUE GENERAL

(aside) Jee-zuz...Mr. President, we face an extremely serious situation. I have asked for a full attack conference. Under my authority I am about to move us from BIG NOISE to COCKED PISTOL.

PRESIDENT

...BIG PISTOL?

BLUE GENERAL

Mr. President, I know you are upstairs but the line is secure.

PRESIDENT

Who is this?

BLUE GENERAL

Icarus.

A long, long pause.

PRESIDENT

Icarus.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BLUE GENERAL

Icarus, yes. Mr. President, is your EWO there?

PRESIDENT

...EWO?

BLUE GENERAL

The man with the black briefcase outside your bedroom, Mr. President.

INT. CAFETERIA -- ALERT FACILITY -- FAIRCHILD AFB

RADNOR, a radar operator in his 20's enters the almost empty cafeteria. He's sweaty after his workout. He's in gym clothes but his flight suit from which he is never separated, is draped over his arm. He waves to his WIFE, an Air Force cop, then glides his tray down a stainless steel counter where the menu reads: Donut 1c, pie 5c, Blue plate special 35c. He chooses a donut and bounces a single penny off the counter top before approaching his wife.

RADNOR

Hey, this chow's the best deal in town. All you have to do is work a 168 hour week without overtime.

She smiles and shows him the base newspaper, the GEIGER ALERT.

WIFE

Did you see this?

The headline reads: A DOOMSDAY ROMANCE -- FINDING LOVE BY THE MEGATON. The article includes a wedding picture of the smiling couple.

RADNOR

Hey I don't mind. They always raz the career guys. Once the Air Force let you transfer here, man, I don't care what they say.

They hold hands and moon at each other.

RADNOR

You got duty tonight?

She bites her lip and shakes her head yes.

RADNOR

Well, that still gives us a little time to play Mountie and the Squaw. Let me hit the shower first.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITTING ROOM/SAC HEADQUARTERS -- INTERCUT

PRESIDENT

Sorry, General, you caught me half asleep. Wife's off in Connecticut christening a ship.

BLUE GENERAL

You need your EWO immediately, sir.

PRESIDENT

What seems to be the problem?

BLUE GENERAL

Mr. President, we are in the secondary stages of a major attack, probably a counterforce variation. SIOP is analyzing it now. Our defenses show a swarm attack by submarines almost certainly Soviet, and a random attack by land based ICBM's, certainly Soviet. We need your authority.

The President stares at Mission Impossible for a moment.

PRESIDENT

Defenses. The computers again, huh? General, may I be candid with you, this is a shitty way to get a new set of computers.

BLUE GENERAL

Sir!

PRESIDENT

How many times since I became President have those damn machines screwed up? How many times have they screwed up so badly we have gone to attack conferences? Five? Six?

BLUE GENERAL

And how many times have I picked up this telephone, Mr. President? We have no time for this, sir. We need your authority. This is real. This is Pearl Harbor.

PRESIDENT

I don't believe it. I talked to the Russian ambassador today.

BLUE GENERAL

I'm talking to SIOP. I trust him more.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT

And what is your computerized advisor telling you, General? You woke me up at one in the morning with this crap. What is SIOP telling you? Your career may be riding on it.

BLUE GENERAL

My career, sir?

The General looks at the screen in front of him, watching the white lines snake further from Plesetsk. He sees one of the side screens spewing out data. It shows one of the missiles achieving sub-orbital flight over the Arctic Ocean and the margin of error on the missile's trajectory is instantly reduced. The General's voice becomes brittle.

BLUE GENERAL

SIOP is telling me that a Soviet SS-18, carrying 2.5 to 5 megatons, has my name on it. Mr. President, SIOP is telling me my career will be over in twenty-two minutes. I'm also being told that a submarine launched missile has MIRV'd near Richmond. One of its multiple warheads, carrying 40 kilotons, is directed in the vicinity of Washington; ... Strange, that. So small...SIOP says the odds are 50-50 the target is the White House, 30 70 Andrews Air Force Base. It will arrive in seven minutes, sir.

The President looks up to see his EWO (Emergency War Orders Officer). He is the man with the "football", the black briefcase with the codes to start a nuclear war. The EWO flicks off "Mission Impossible" on the TV. Behind him the APPOINTMENTS SECRETARY and SEDGEWICK, the Duty Officer come hurriedly through the door.

INT. SHOWERS AND LOCKER ROOM -- ALERT FACILITY -- FAIRCHILD AFB

Water pelts O'TOOLE, the young B-52d Electronic Warfare Officer, with a thousand Lilliputian fingers. His Gulliver's hand pummels Ivory soap turning it into a froth that invades every bodily crevice. He feels good. As he works the Ivory into the warmth at the top of his thighs he feels a familiar pleasure.

RADNOR (o.s.)

O'Toole!

O'Toole's spongy knees snap into near lock-joint.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RADNOR (o.s.)

Cleanliness may be next to Godliness,
you Mick prick, but you can't stay
in the shower all night.

O'Toole relaxes. Radnor hadn't seen. Radnor begins to unlace his sneakers.

O'TOOLE

Don't try anything funny, Radnor.
One of my best friends is a security
cop here and she'd just love to get
a couple of hot shot SAC airmen on
lewd behavior.

Radnor laughs. O'Toole lets the shower spray down the soap. Then he turns the hot water OFF and the cold water ON FULL to get a real jar of stimulation.

EXT./INT. WHITE HOUSE SITTING ROOM/SAC HEADQUARTERS

Winking red eyes become tiny Orwellian orbs at the top of the Washington Monument lit up at night. We are PULLING BACK through the Sitting Room window. The President is gripping the phone and staring at the file his EWO has spread before him. The Appointments Secretary places a hand on the Presidential shoulder, squeezing slightly, seeming to nudge. The President looks around him, he feels alone.

PRESIDENT

The Secretary of Defense is not here.
The Secretary of State is not here.
The head of the National Security
Council is not here.

BLUE GENERAL

They will not be there, sir. We
anticipated this. SIOP has
accounted for it.

PRESIDENT

A decision of this magnitude...

BLUE GENERAL

We've been through this before, sir.
You don't have to make those
decisions. The SIOP computer will
make those decisions. We need your
authority. In the codes. In the
EWO's briefcase.

PRESIDENT

SIOP will make those decisions, a
goddamned computer?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BLUE GENERAL

The goddamn computer has twenty-one minutes, sir. You have less than seven. Mr. President, we have placed all the options, determined by the best human brains of two generations in SIOP. The Russian options are in RSIOP. It's all there, even, I am sure, this rather strange attack sequence.

PRESIDENT

...Strange?

BLUE GENERAL

We're wasting time, sir. Your time.

Sedgewick, the Duty Officer who's been on a second telephone looks up plaintively.

SEDGEWICK

A message is arriving on the direct teletype from the Soviet Premiere.

PRESIDENT

Did you hear that, General?

BLUE GENERAL

Yes, sir. Nastygram on the hotline. Shrewd buggers, aren't they?

PRESIDENT

What is your super brain telling you now about the Premiere's earlier message for me?

BLUE GENERAL

Six minutes twenty seconds to impact. Trajectory still uncertain. Wobbling slightly. Forty kilotons. Ground burst likely. 10-90 probability on Andrews. Still 50-50 on the White House.

The President stiffens now, sensing something SIOP never would. He places both palms against his forehead, runs his fingers through his hair.

PRESIDENT

I'm going downstairs to read that message.

BLUE GENERAL

You're what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PRESIDENT
I'm going to see that telegram,
General.

BLUE GENERAL
Mr. President, you are playing with
the fate of millions.

PRESIDENT
That's how I earn my 200 thou, General.

BLUE GENERAL
They're mousetrapping you.

PRESIDENT
We'll see.

The President hangs up. We stay with the Blue General at SAC Headquarters.

BLUE GENERAL
Get me Alice in the Looking Glass Plane.

The Blue General looks around for his Number Two, a Navy man. His code name is HARPOON.

BLUE GENERAL
Time to go, Admiral. We need at
least two command planes up.

HARPOON
The Navy doesn't like to abandon
ship, General.

BLUE GENERAL
This is my ship. Yours is the E-4.
The country's going to need you and
Alice up there when we're gone.

HARPOON
Still...

BLUE GENERAL
You don't want me to order you to
do your duty.

HARPOON
No.

Harpoon picks up the satchel at his side, looks in the General's eyes for the last time, and snaps a salute. The General salutes back. Harpoon leaves.

AIDE
General, Alice is on the line.

CONTINUED: (3)

The General picks up the phone.

BLUE GENERAL
Alice, Harpoon's launched.

EXT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE -- INFLIGHT -- NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

The Looking Glass plane is a modified military 707.

ALICE (v.o.)
Yes, sir.

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)
You getting the SIOP battle orders?
Missile impact projections?

INT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE -- INFLIGHT -- NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

At his workstation the Two Star General, code named ALICE responds.

ALICE
Clear as a bell, sir.

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)
Print 'em out. You aren't gonna have
computers long.

ALICE
It's been done, sir.

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)
I'll try to get back to you with a
couple of minutes to go; Harpoon,
too. My clock says nineteen minutes.

ALICE
0611 ZULU.

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)
Right.

INT. GAME ROOM -- ALERT FACILITY -- FAIRCHILD AFB

Kazaklis kicks the Space Invaders game in frustration.

KAZAKLIS
Damn machine. Life's run by goddamn
computers that don't work.

Kazaklis kicks the machine again and turns to find Halupalai
grinning at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAZAKLIS

You laughing at me, you over-the-hill beach boy? I don't know who's worse, you or Moreau. You at least have an IQ bigger than your shoe size. It's very hard to pilot a plane with the president of the Girls Athletic League.

HALUPALAI

You're hopeless, Kazaklis. Why don't you let up on her?

KAZAKLIS

Me? Don't lay that one on me, pal. This joint's been like a sorority house since Moreau showed up.

HALUPALAI

Uh uh. You'd like that.

KAZAKLIS

She still walks around here like she's got cramps twenty-eight days a month. You think you can trust somebody with nukes if they're on the rag?

Halupalai goes quiet. He doesn't want to play anymore. He drifts a far, far distance away. Kazaklis' smile fades. He looks at Halupalai for a moment.

KAZAKLIS

Why don't you get out of this, Halupalai? How old are you, forty-two? Forty-three? Been through Nam. Why don't you retire and coach football in those islands of yours?

And then the SIREN WAILS.

Halupalai bolts out of his chair. He starts his scatback dash, pivots sharply under the howling klaxon over the door and collides with a terror stricken Vietnamese dishwasher with a plastic tub full of plates. No word of social grace is uttered, the clock is on them now. Kazaklis hits the hallway, trailing only slightly.

INT. MOREAU'S DORM ROOM -- ALERT FACILITY -- FAIRCHILD AFB

Moreau lands on her feet before her sleepy brain has completely changed gears. Her roommate moves simultaneously and the two women wedge in the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Halupalai shoots past in the hallway before Moreau elbows out first, ripping the chastity belt photo in the scuffle. She slips in front of Kazaklis taking off with long, long strides.

Kazaklis cuts off the roommate, causing her to stumble.

INT. LIBRARY -- ALERT FACILITY -- FAIRCHILD AFB

We SEE Tyler doing a little Indian dance as he hops on one foot, then the other, tucking the laces into his boots without tying them. He slams his economics text shut and runs.

INT. SHOWERS AND LOCKER ROOM -- ALERT FACILITY -- FAIRCHILD

O'Toole's heart leaps, as his stomach sinks, in a desperate attempt to turn off the cold water. Radnor is already pulling on his flight suit over his work-out shorts. He glances over at O'Toole with no sign of sympathy.

RADNOR

You gonna have one very clean, very cold fanny, pal.

O'Toole silently answers with an "Oh, shit" look in his eyes. He grabs a towel, discards it immediately -- seconds ticking away -- and pulls his flight suit on over his dripping wet body. He forces his wet feet into his boots, grabs his socks, underwear, and flight suit and starts running. He pauses in the doorway, lurches after another towel, misses, drops his socks, pauses, leaves the socks and starts running again like a scared kid on the way to the dentist.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM -- WASHINGTON, D.C.

The President is surrounded by oppressive grey file cabinets. He is impatiently waiting for the telegraph operator, an Army SIGNAL CORPSMAN to finish. As the Corpsman finishes, he forces a look of detachment as he hands the telegram to the President. As the President begins to read we hear the Russian Premier's voice.

PREMIER (v.o.)

My dear Mr. President. By now you are aware that my government has launched a limited number of nuclear weapons at your country. The missiles are selectively destined for targets which will inflict minimum damage on your great nation and its civilian population and even its military resources.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PREMIER (Cont'd)

Your wisdom at this delicate time can minimize the consequences of this event which the mistakes of both nations have made inevitable. The parameters of our action must be clear to you by now -- a strike at all your bomber bases, a single ICBM complex in Montana, and your primary command facilities at Omaha and Cheyenne Mountain. These show the obvious -- that all your targets, like all ours, are vulnerable. There is one final element. A single small warhead has been directed at Andrews Air Force Base. It has been set for ground burst explosion which will do little damage beyond the base. The target is symbolic, Andrews being the base from which you would normally leave Washington. Some of my colleagues demanded the inclusion of an intimidation factor. It will do you no personal harm.

EXT. ALERT FACILITY -- FAIRCHILD AFB

The hair in O'Toole's nostrils is frozen. Icy darts jab through the soles of his boots. We HEAR the SOUND of WET FEET SLOSHING inside. His mind is numb as he careens down the out-ramp of the Alert Facility. Only his instincts and his training propel him after his crewmates.

EXT. B-52 FLIGHT LINE -- FAIRCHILD AFB

Near the wing tip of their plane, Moreau, Halupalai, and Kazaklis are neck and neck. Moreau scrambles up the belly hold first. Kazaklis enters next, his groping hand landing on the inside of the co-pilot's thigh.

MOREAU

You bastard!

KAZAKLIS

Move it, Moreau. I've felt better thighs on a supermarket fryer.

At the top of the stairwell, Moreau hurries forward to the right hand co-pilot's seat. She pulls the white, moon man helmet over her head, adjusts the radio to all five channels. Kazaklis slips into the left hand seat and does the same.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAZAKLIS

Ignition.

MOREAU

Ignition.

Kazaklis' sinewy hands, covered in fire-proofed gloves, begin manipulating eight white engine throttles. The engine roar begins to accelerate. He glances at the luminous dial of his watch and begins to chafe. He turns and peers into the dark recesses of the back of the compartment. He sees two forms over the locked code box. Halupalai is shaking O'Toole violently, then slaps him hard.

KAZAKLIS

Codes! Have you idiots gone mad back there?! Codes!!

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM -- WASHINGTON, D.C.

The President's Appointments Secretary places a hand on the President's shoulder.

APPOINTMENTS SECRETARY

Mr. President, please, there is so little time.

The President glances up briefly then resumes reading. The Russian Premier's voice continues as before.

PREMIER (v.o.)

It is of epochal importance that you understand my rationale and recognize that this is not an attempt at territorial or political gain. It is a moderate response to political realities inside my nation -- and your nation as well. We have talked to no avail and the insanity continues. Quite simply, Mr. President, my nation cannot afford to match your arms buildups. Nor can it allow them to go unmatched. Two weeks ago, the Politburo voted to mount a full scale pre-emptive attack against your military and strategic targets. A second assault was poised against your cities if you responded. I was able to delay that action. But I have merely bought us a brief moment for one last, perhaps desperate effort to halt the madness.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PREMIER (Cont'd)

I think we all, the leaders of both our nations, knew it inevitably must come to this -- or worse. Therefore, to be blunt, Mr. President, you now have three choices, only two of which are acceptable to us. You can accept the damage and we will stop, the world divided as it is now between us. Like you, I am a politician. I cannot imagine my political system allowing me to accept that choice. Your second choice is to respond with a limited counter attack that inflicts on my nation a similar amount of damage. We will accept that, provided the world's spheres of influence remain the same and the arms increases cease. Our calculations show that you will lose between six and nine million people in our attack. We will accept a similar loss. It is a tremendous price to pay but perhaps it can serve as a symbol that shows all factions in both our nations the lunacy of the game we have been playing. You will be under tremendous pressure, as I was, to respond massively. This is your third choice. If this is your ultimate choice my government already has decided to reply in kind, even before your missiles land. I pray now, Mr. President, that the distrust is not total and that, through the pain of the next few minutes, you make the decision that can bring this to a less than perfect end, but an end.

INT. B-52 -- FAIRCHILD AFB

KAZAKLIS

(into his radio) Gunner!! Do something.

HALUPALAI

I've got a block of ice here, Commander. O'Toole's frozen like a side of beef. I can't get him to move.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAZAKLIS

O'Toole, you son of a bitch, if Halupalai doesn't kick you in the balls, I'll come back there and you'll never use those precious jewels of yours again.

HALUPALAI

He can't hear you, sir, his helmet's off.

KAZAKLIS

Jesus, hook him up.

Halupalai jams the white helmet over O'Toole's unmoving head and attaches the radio joint.

KAZAKLIS

O'Toole, can you hear me?

O'TOOLE

...Mama.

KAZAKLIS

Oh, Jesus wept.

MOREAU

As well He might.

KAZAKLIS

Shut up, Moreau.

MOREAU

You're the aircraft commander, Commander.

KAZAKLIS

And what would you do, co-pilot?

MOREAU

Go back there and warm him up one way or another.

KAZAKLIS

That'll be the day.

Moreau unsnaps her shoulder harness, reaches into her pocket for the standard red filtered pen light, and wheels out of her seat.

A tiny beam of light wobbles towards the two figures. Finally Moreau reaches O'Toole and grabs his helmet in her hands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MOREAU

Lt. O'Toole. We are in combat conditions. Give me the key.

O'Toole stares mesmerized by Moreau's eyes. His lips move wordlessly.

MOREAU

The key!

O'TOOLE

Suh...cur...uty...Security
vi...lay...shun.

MOREAU

Then do it yourself, Lieutenant.
Now!

Pause.

O'TOOLE

Mama.

KAZAKLIS

Jesus. Kick him in the gonads. I'm not kidding, Moreau. Kick him in the balls.

Moreau edges closer to O'Toole. She slides her helmet visor down so her head is fully encased. She places the red penlight on her chin, shining the red rays up inside the visor. Halupalai reacts to the vision. O'Toole's eyes widen in fear.

MOREAU (sing-song)

Give me the key... Give me the key.

O'TOOLE

Angelus moratuorum.

MOREAU

The key, Lieutenant.

He gives her the key.

MOREAU

Give me the combination.

O'TOOLE

One...fourteen.....thirty-two.

Moreau tugs at Halupalai. They bend over the code box and enter the keys, turning them simultaneously. She nods and they spin the twin combination locks. The top of the box pops open and she reaches in for the two code folders.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

She hands one to Halupalai then pulls his ear close to her mouth.

MOREAU

Strap him in. We'll get him out of here soon.

Moreau moves back toward her seat. It's cold. Her breath trails behind.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

The President is on the phone with the Blue General.

PRESIDENT

How long?

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

Forty-five seconds.

PRESIDENT

The warhead is aimed at Andrews. Surgical ground burst. Symbolic.

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

Horseshit.

PRESIDENT

Put SIOP on this problem. I want a responsive attack designed as closely as possible to the Soviet attack. Take out all their surface-to-air missile bases, plus token ICBM installations and a submarine base. Take out their command facilities and put the same kilotonnage coming at Andrews, at Vnukovo Airfield outside Moscow. Leave the rest of their strategic systems intact. Under no circumstances is the plan to kill more than nine million Soviet citizens. Not one more. Do you understand?

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

Mr. President, you are being conned on a level unprecedented in human history.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT

General, I will hear no more of this. Instruct your computer. When the response is programmed, I will activate the EWO codes through the proper civilian authorities as the law requires.

The President hands the phone to the much impressed Duty Officer. The President slumps in an armchair and closes his eyes. In the background the teletype begins chattering.

INT. B-52 -- FAIRCHILD AFB

Kazaklis turns to check an elevation reading for the Fairchild runways, co-ordinating it to sea level on another altimeter.

KAZAKLIS

Two. Four. Five. Seven.

MOREAU

Two. Four. Five. Seven.

KAZAKLIS

Los Angeles moratorium?

MOREAU

Angeles moratuorum. Grade school Latin for angel of death.

KAZAKLIS

Wrath of the church, huh? Figured you'd like the ball-breaking approach better.

MOREAU

Screw you, Kazaklis. Just get your job done. We need to get the poor bastard out of here pronto. Even if you're the one who thinks it's real every time the alarm goes off.

KAZAKLIS

You better think it's real, angel. It's simpler that way.

Moreau cuts Kazaklis out of her radio circuit and goes on personal with Halupalai.

MOREAU

Gunner! Launch code check.

HALUPALAI

Roger.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'Toole sits silently at his own station in the rear, lights flashing meaninglessly in front of him.

Kazaklis returns to his routine: Checking flaps, adjusting engine revolutions, checking gauges, and then a final check on the bright yellow squares at his right, just beyond the throttles. BOMB DOORS NOT LATCHED reads the first square. BOMB DOORS OPEN reads the second. The third square reads BOMB DOORS NOT CLOSED AND LOCKED. One by one the yellow lights blip off as Kazaklis secures the doors.

HALUPALAI

Code check ready, Commander.

KAZAKLIS

Code check ready.

HALUPALAI

Zero. Zero. Alpha. Hotel. One
Nin-er. Zero. Three. Quebec.
Nin-er. Quebec.

Kazaklis repeats the calls carefully as he punches each one into the new decoder.

KAZAKLIS

Zero. Zero. Alpha. Hotel. One
Nin-er. Zero. Three. Quebec.
Nin-er. Quebec.

The code matches. The hair on his arms begins to stand up.

KAZAKLIS

Sequence two.

HALUPALAI

Zebra. Zebra. Zebra. Six. Zero.
Two. Nin-er. Nin-er. Fox trot.

Kazaklis freezes. It is one digit off a "go."

KAZAKLIS

Co-pilot, recheck sequence two.

MOREAU

Zebra. Zero. Zebra...

KAZAKLIS

Code word!

HALUPALAI

Trinity.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KAZAKLIS

Tower. I want voice confirmation.
Sequence one, go. Sequence two, go.
Code: Trinity. Confirm.

VOICE (solemn)

Confirm Trinity. Confirm go.

Inside the B-52 the radio goes deadly silent. Then Kazaklis places his hands on the throttles and begins the crew check.

KAZAKLIS

Co-pilot, ready?

MOREAU

Ready.

KAZAKLIS

Navigator, ready?

TYLER

READY.

Kazaklis hits the throttles. He is calm, feeling the dance with danger. The PLANE is rolling now.

KAZAKLIS

Any questions?... Any jokes?

The JET NOISE rises to a crescendo.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM -- WASHINGTON, D.C.

We SEE large black capital LETTERS READING VERTICALLY -- like some dream-world eye chart: B O P H U T H A T S W A N A. REVERSE to find the President's face, blinking.

He is pinned under a tangle of filing cabinets. He lies on his Appointment Secretary's belly. A huge file cabinet lays across the Secretary's face. Red is already beginning to seep from underneath. The President reacts, tries to wrench away, and can't.

SEDGEWICK

Hold on, Mr. President.
We'll have you out in a minute.

We now have pulled back far enough to SEE the whole room. Acoustical ceiling pieces wobble, loosely. The conference table is splintered, files and chairs are scattered about. Still, in one corner the EWO stands unruffled, his suit hardly mussed, his black briefcase intact. Others begin moving around the room methodically.

PRESIDENT

So where'd we get it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sedgewick helps the President to his feet.

SEDGEWICK

Not exactly sure, sir. Northwest of here, not at Andrews.

PRESIDENT

Why are we alive?

The President looks at his dead Secretary and a wave of dizziness hits him.

SEDGEWICK

Take it easy, Mr. President...I think they were telling the truth about a ground burst. I think the explosion was small, dug a big hole and concentrated the damage.

PRESIDENT

What else?

SEDGEWICK

Well,...unless it landed in a park it probably landed in a residential area. Upper northwest Washington. At this time of night, I'd say fifty thousand people just died.

All in the room take stock of that line.

PRESIDENT

What next?

SEDGEWICK

Communications are out. Briefly, I think. We'll have Omaha back up any second. Ah, you also have another message from the Soviet Premier. It was arriving as communications went down.

PRESIDENT

Give it to me.

As the President reads we SEE the message and hear the Soviet Premier's voice again.

PREMIER (v.o.)

Andrews missile malfunctioning. Deep regrets. Target military. Repeat: Target, Andrews. All at stake in your belief in my intentions.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PREMIER (Cont'd)
Our combined will crucial. Other
unexpected complications forcing...

The message breaks off. The President rubs his temples, his head
swimming again.

SEDGEWICK
Omaha's back.

The President takes the phone.

PRESIDENT
Hello, General.

BLUE GENERAL
They overshot Andrews by thirteen
miles. The blast wave rolled right
up Rock Creek Park and took out
Walter Reed Hospital. My father was
there.

PRESIDENT
I'm truly sorry.

BLUE GENERAL
It's irrelevant. He was sick. He
was a soldier. A father should die
before his son. Anyway the hospital
wasn't the target. Andrews wasn't
the target. You were the target.
You were very lucky, Mr. President.
You get what I won't -- a second
chance.

PRESIDENT
A second chance?

BLUE GENERAL
SIOP is now developing a more
appropriate response. There have
been some unusual developments. The
Premier has got a lot of problems.
You get a second chance to save the
world from those bastards, Mr.
President.

PRESIDENT
Save the world?

INT. 5TH GRADE CLASSROOM -- MOREAU'S FLASHBACK CIRCA 1960

We SEE the six year old Moreau seated at her desk, her hands folded. We SEE the young woman SCHOOL TEACHER holding a stop watch and a clipboard looking anxiously at her class and at the clock on the wall. As the big hand and the second hand reach twelve she shouts.

TEACHER

Flash!

Simultaneously the fifth grade class drops to the floor, crouching beneath their desks. Over this we hear:

RADIO VOICE

This is a test. This station is conducting a test of the Emergency Broadcasting System.

We HEAR a high pitched WHINE. Z-n-n-n-n-n-n-n-n-n-n-n-n-n-n. As the WHINE CHANGES PITCH we begin to DISSOLVE rapidly and:

INT. B-52 COCKPIT -- INFLIGHT -- DUSK

Moreau jerks slightly at the sound. She turns and sees Kazaklis reaching for the lead-lined flash curtain. He tugs at the dirty screen, pulling it across his side of the cockpit window. The whine stops.

KAZAKLIS

I've got it now, co-pilot. Pull your curtain.

Moreau looks at him strangely, still believing this is a drill.

KAZAKLIS

Draw your curtain, co-pilot.

MOREAU

Are you nuts, Kazaklis? We've got commercial jets out there. I'm not pulling my screen in a drill, no way.

KAZAKLIS

Draw...that...screen.

Moreau tightens.

KAZAKLIS (calm)

Take the plane, co-pilot.

He then lunges out of his seat and reaches across the cockpit towards Moreau's curtain. In the closeness, his gloved hand accidentally catches Moreau in the LEFT EYE before he grasps the curtain. The plane NOSES DOWNWARD as Moreau drops the controls, pulling her hand up over her left eye. Kazaklis wrenches at the curtain and succeeds in closing all but a narrow gap.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He sits back in his seat, takes the controls and steadies the plane.

Moreau sits mute for a moment, her left hand remaining over her eye. Now with her right hand she stretches forward to close the gap in the curtain. We SEE her one eye staring. Then we SEE her POV of the winter white moon she is trying to shut out.

Then the moon BURSTS. It bursts into a sun, then into ten thousand suns. Moreau's eye remains transfixed on the curtain crack. Then the screen goes white for a few seconds.

RADNOR (v.o.)

What the hell was that?

MOREAU

Angeles moratuorum.

O'TOOLE (v.o.)

Mama.

KAZAKLIS

Knock it off. Everybody.

MOREAU

Angel of death...

KAZAKLIS

Moreau, stop babbling. I need you now.

Moreau begins to turn toward Kazaklis. Her left hand comes down from her eye. In the haunted red light of their cocoon, the covered eye now peers at us its usual blue. The other eye stares flecked with white, dead blind.

KAZAKLIS

...Moreau.

Moreau swallows hard.

MOREAU

The optic nerve is gone...I don't feel any pain. Let's get on with it.

ANGLE ON HALUPALAI AND O'TOOLE WHO SIT SIDE BY SIDE, THEIR TO THE COCKPIT.

Halupalai's hand is instinctively on the ejection lever.

HALUPALAI

Jesus Christ.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KAZAKLIS (v.o.)
Shock wave! Brace!

Halupalai jerks his hand away from the ejection lever. He doesn't want it there when the shock wave hits.

KAZAKLIS (v.o.)
Four, five, six...

Halupalai closes his eyes for an instant. He is riding a 30 foot wave on a surfboard in the sun. The wave cresting over him. The eyes blink open.

KAZAKLIS (v.o.)
seven, eight, nine...

INT. B-52 COCKPIT -- INFLIGHT, CLIMBING

Kazaklis and Moreau are pulling back on their sticks, hard, trying to get the Buff as high as possible. It will take all their strength. The altimeter reads 8,500...8,600.

KAZAKLIS
ten, eleven, t...

The shock wave hits. Kazaklis looks like he's been hit in the gut, then clubbed. He is hurled forward into the pinched embrace of his seat harness, then whipped back. He can hear the B-52's wings groaning under the immense stress, but he is groggy as if in a dream.

MOREAU
Get the nose down, Kazaklis!... Damn
it, you're going to stall us!

The air speed gauge reads under mach. 35. The horizon indicator seems to be all out of kilter.

KAZAKLIS
Gauges, malfunctioning.

MOREAU
Nose down!

Kazaklis ignores her. The air speed indicator drops further. Yellow alarm lights start flashing all over like a pinball machine.

A well placed judo chop finds the soft joint in Kazaklis' shoulder where the nerves are exposed. His hands withdraw from the wheel in a reflex motion. Moreau sits hunched over her wheel, nudging the nose down. Kazaklis is rubbing the pain in his shoulder. Then the AFTER SHOCKS hit, swiftly and in rapid succession. The shocks pass more or less quietly and with decreasing vigor. A few beats pass then Kazaklis cocks an eye at Moreau...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAZAKLIS

Well, I owe you one, Moreau.

Moreau turns towards him.

MOREAU

I'd say we're even, Commander.

Kazaklis sees what he can read into that but she is so steady there is no way of telling. She turns back to her controls.

KAZAKLIS

Okay, let's find out what happened.
(into radio) Nav, this is the pilot.
You guys comfy down there?

INT. B-52 -- INFLIGHT -- NAVIGATORS COMPARTMENT

Down below, the first and second navigators sit side by side at desk-like radar consoles. The feeling is claustrophobic and the red light brings the walls in closer.

TYLER (flatly)

Scope's messed up.

KAZAKLIS

You sure? Ours are working now.

TYLER

Goddamnit, I said my scope's messed up.

Radnor looks over at Tyler who is staring blankly at his cross-hatched screen. The circling arm of the radar passes over an ugly spot, like an amoeba under a microscope. Then another, and another. Radnor catches a sob in his throat. He pulls back from Tyler's screen fighting back tears.

RADNOR

Three detonations, Commander.

TYLER

Nooooo!

RADNOR

One slightly below us, maybe fifteen miles ahead, fifteen degrees south. The others are behind us, airburst altitude, due east...roughly twelve and sixteen miles now.

Radnor tries to place a reassuring hand on Tyler's shoulder. Tyler pushes it away savagely.

INT. B-52 COCKPIT -- INFLIGHT

Moreau motions Kazaklis to flip the radio to their private channel.

MOREAU

Tyler hasn't got much to go home to.

KAZAKLIS

Dead center. One on the base and one on the town. One misfire.

MOREAU

Bastards.

KAZAKLIS

What would you have done? This ain't tiddly-winks, pal. They wanted to catch us on the ground. It almost worked.

MOREAU

Yeah. Instead I become Pirate Annie.

Kazaklis ignores her, his mind flipping through options.

KAZAKLIS

What would you do if you were a sub commander and your job was to take us out, all the way out?

MOREAU

Hit us again in thirty to sixty seconds. In case I missed, in case my warheads detonated each other, in case someone escaped.

KAZAKLIS

That's right. So, if you were sitting out in the Pacific guessing eight minutes ago, where would you have dumped the next load?

MOREAU

West. They know we would take off west. And north. Where we're turning.

KAZAKLIS

Right...and wrong. We're turning south.

MOREAU

Tahiti? The base commander would love it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAZAKLIS

No palm trees for you, Moreau. I gotta loop us around one big hot mother of a cloud. We're playing percentage baseball tonight.

The B-52 banks sharply left.

MOREAU

We need a REM count.

KAZAKLIS

You're not glowing in the dark yet, Moreau.

MOREAU

Get off my back, Kazaklis. We need to know how much radiation we took.

KAZAKLIS

Not now we don't. It's irrelevant isn't it? For a ten hour suicide trip you're gonna live long enough. We'll check later. Right now I'd rather know if we have any friendlies with us.

Pause.

MOREAU (into radio)

...Radnor?

RADNOR

Beats me, Captain. I can only see one aircraft on my screen.... in a very strange place. Half dozen miles behind us, very low, heading northwest.

Moreau changes radio channels.

MOREAU

Polar bear cubs, this is Mama Bear looking for strays. Do you read? This is Polar Bear One looking for Polar Bear Two.

POLAR BEAR THREE (v.o.)

Hello, Mama Bear. Nice to hear your voice. This is Polar Bear Three. Ya'all lookin' for us, too?

MOREAU

You're way off course, Polar Bear Three.

CONTINUED: (2)

POLAR BEAR THREE (v.o.)
Not sunprisin'. Nope not sunprisin'
a'tall to hear that.

MOREAU
Polar Bear Three. Do you have
problems?

POLAR BEAR THREE (v.o.)
Might say so, Mama. Couple.

MOREAU
Can we help you?

POLAR BEAR THREE (v.o.)
Don't rightly think so, thanks.
Ya-all get to write the manual for
World War IV, underline the part
about pulling your screens, hear?

MOREAU
You're blinded.

POLAR BEAR THREE (v.o.)
Flying this Buff by Braille, Mama
Bear.

MOREAU
Hang in there, Polar Bear. It's not
the end of...

Moreau stops. Polar Bear Three chuckles.

POLAR BEAR THREE (v.o.)
Li'll slip there, Mama Bear. Hope
yore right. But I think that's
ya-all's problem now. Not ours.

MOREAU
There's a lot of desert down there,
Polar Bear Three. We'll talk you
down.

KAZAKLIS
Goddamn it, Moreau. We aren't
talking anybody, anywhere.

POLAR BEAR THREE (v.o.)
Calm down, Commander. We already
talked and none of us feels much
like wanderin' around in the desert
for a few hours stumblin' over
mutated prairie dogs.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

POLAR BEAR THREE (Cont'd)

'Fraid I wobbled us right through the edge of a cloud. We took about 2000 REMS. In a hospital we'd be dead in thirty-six hours. If we was goin' to a hospital.

ANGLE ON RADNOR at his navigator's station. He is shaking like a leaf. On the radar screen in front of him, the blip representing Polar Bear Three is heading for what looks like a pulsating jelly fish.

POLAR BEAR THREE (v.o.)

Think we'll just mosey on north and see how far we git. We don't make it, ya-all do us a favor? Git those Commie mothas for us. Pardon the language, Mama Bear.

The jelly fish pulses on the screen about to envelop Polar Bear Three.

RADNOR

...Commander!

The screen flashes a little, then again before there is no more blip for Polar Bear Three. A SIZZLING STATIC SOUND is HEARD on the radio which then subsides.

KAZAKLIS (v.o.)

...Radar?

MOREAU (v.o.)

Polar Bear Three. This is Mama Bear. Do you read me?

KAZAKLIS (v.o.)

You see any airplanes down there, Radar?

RADNOR

Nothing, sir. They headed straight into the detonations.

TYLER

Commander? Would you turn on the heater? It's colder than a well-digger's ass down here.

KAZAKLIS (v.o.)

Well, Tyler. Glad you could join us.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM -- WASHINGTON, D.C.

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

...The Chinese have hit the Russians on their border. The Pakistanis and the Indians have planes with A-bombs headed for each other's capitals. The Israelies have planes headed in every direction with a message to us saying 'Stay out of our way.'

PRESIDENT

Just a second, General.

Bluish-white tongues of flame from acetylin torches on the other side of the door slice away at the remaining hinges. The door gives way. Half a dozen Secret Servicemen sweep in with stubby submachine guns.

The President barely acknowledges them and turns back to the phone.

PRESIDENT

General, sorry for the commotion. Can you continue please?

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

We've had a detonation in Damascus. And also in Southern Africa.

PRESIDENT

That's one way to solve apartheid.

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

Everyone seems to be solving their problems, sir.

PRESIDENT

General, do you allot no credibility whatsoever to the possibility the Premier's intentions are exactly as he stated them?

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

Mr. President, must we go through this?

PRESIDENT

...YES.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

I allot none. If I did, wouldn't an attack on our missile silos have been much more reasonable, much more humanitarian? They are far more isolated than our bomber bases. Fewer civilians would have been killed.

PRESIDENT

General, I don't think you believe that. Such an attack would have left us almost naked militarily. Unfortunately we can afford to lose the people more than we can afford to lose the ICBMs. The Premier knows that.

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

Mr. President, as God is my witness, it doesn't make any difference. It has gone too far.

PRESIDENT

So, what does SIOP say about the solution to our problem.

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

SIOP has composed a simple two-part sequence. Launch half our ICBM force from alternating silos, targeting Soviet silos. If the Soviets respond, even their computers will be hard put to determine which of our silos are empty and which are not.

PRESIDENT

And how does RSIOP say it would respond under the circumstances?

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

(long pause)...RSIOP cannot read the extreme political confusion in Moscow at the moment.

PRESIDENT

How would RSIOP respond, General?

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

In a politically normal situation, RSIOP predicts a full launch of Soviet ICBMs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PRESIDENT

The targets?

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

Double targeting of the missile fields, all NATO installations in Europe, the remainder of the military targets in the United States...

PRESIDENT

And?...cities?

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

More than likely.

The President closes his eyes. His mind is becoming rubbery. He forces himself to think. There is an embarrassing long silence.

SEDGEWICK

Sir?

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

Mr. President!...Mr. President!...
The Russians have just launched more ICBMs.

PRESIDENT

Are they directed at us?

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

We can't tell yet. Are you suggesting we wait?

The President is cornered and he knows it.

PRESIDENT

...No. I will go with SIOP. We will do it in the prescribed fashion.

The President takes the briefcase from the Emergency War Orders Officer and handles the details as easily as signing milk-support bills. When he finishes he has real pain in his eyes. He looks up at the Duty Officer.

PRESIDENT

Do you think the Premier was sincere?

SEDGEWICK

Don't torture yourself, Mr. President. We have to leave right now.

PRESIDENT

Do you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SEDGEWICK

I doubt it. The idea was child-like.
Impossible.

EXT. E-4 -- INFLIGHT -- NIGHT

The E-4, a converted 747 with United States of America painted on its side flies camera right.

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

Harpoon? You get the SIOP battle order changes?

HARPOON (v.o.)

Instantly, sir.

INT. E-4 -- COMMUNICATIONS STATION -- INFLIGHT

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

I don't know if this President is going to make it to Andrews. Who does the Presidential successor locator say is most likely to succeed?

HARPOON

Number eight, sir. The Secretary of the Interior. He was doing a little P.R. inspecting a wilderness preserve near Baton Rouge. The FBI and the Marines are out looking for him now. We are two hours away heading south.

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

Let's hope he won't be necessary but I doubt it. A lot of big wigs are going to get it tonight!

EXT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE -- INFLIGHT -- NIGHT

This military version of a 707 flies underneath us.

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)

Alice? Your computers show the new target projections in the Soviet Union?

ALICE (v.o.)

Yes, sir.

INT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE -- ALICE'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)
You updated on the impact areas in
the United States?

ALICE
Affirmative.

BLUE GENERAL
Well, I've given you about all I can.
It will be up to you and Harpoon now.

Alice looks at his watch which reads 0630 ZULU. He swallows hard.

BLUE GENERAL (v.o.)
Old buddy? Happy hunt...

Alice hears nothing. Just a SNAP, like a twig breaking. He silently says good-bye. After a moment we can HEAR low POPPING SOUNDS, ELECTRONIC CRACKLES. Then groaning and shouting from the crew. Alice looks down the aisle of the Looking Glass Plane. Computers flare and die. Men and women shout futilely at machines that don't work.

EXT. WHITE HOUSE ROSE GARDEN -- NIGHT

The lighting is very sketchy. It's hard to see but the SOUNDS are frightening. We HEAR THOUSANDS OF VOICES, guttural, primal, ugly. We HEAR THE ANGRY SCOURGE OF METAL ON METAL, CARS SCRAPING, COLLIDING, RAMMING on Pennsylvania Avenue. HORNS BLARE everywhere. GUNFIRE POPS far off and then in bursts nearby. Through it all we HEAR the WHUMP-WHUMP-WHUMP of the President's HELICOPTER.

A flare goes off briefly freeze-framing figures of men clambering over the East fence. The flare goes out but now the red tracers from their guns sweep toward us.

Sedgewick knocks the President to the ground. One, two, many Secret Servicemen fling themselves on top. PING, PING, the bullets hit the side of the chopper.

SEDGEWICK
Take it easy, sir. Just stay down.

PRESIDENT
Who are those people?

SEDGEWICK
People, people, sir. Scared, angry,
spooked people.

PRESIDENT
Why are they shooting at me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEDGEWICK

You've got the last train out of town, Mr. President.

The other Secret Service agents crouch low in a circle around them. One of them speaks urgently into his radio.

AGENT #1

I know that, goddammit. Do you want him dead or alive? No, he does not have his vest on. He's got his bathrobe on! Yes, I understand. (to the President) We don't have time to wait this out. Can you see the chopper, Mr. President?

PRESIDENT

Yes.

AGENT #1

The Marines are gonna open up in a few seconds. We're gonna run. Head down. No stopping. Full speed. Run. Understand?

PRESIDENT

Yes.

AGENT #1

Can you do it?

PRESIDENT

Yes.

In that moment the world explodes again in GUNFIRE. He runs to the bottom of the helicopter stairs and stumbles. One agent and the Duty Officer catch him and shove him roughly up the stairs.

The helicopter lifts off at a strange angle, banks sharply over the trees, and flashes by the Washington Monument on its way toward Andrews Air Force Base.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

KAZAKLIS

In another 150 miles we should be able to...

RADIO (v.o.)

It's red-neckin' (twang! twang!)
luv-makin' (twang! twang!) time.

The radio voice pounds into the crew's earphones. A clawing electric guitar assaults the eardrums.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAZAKLIS

What the hell is that?

RADIO (v.o.)

Listen to the whipporwills (twang!)
how they sing (twang! twang!). Just
like us, doin' their thing! (twang!)

KAZAKLIS

Psywar! Fucking Russians are trying
to psyche us!

MOREAU (calmly)

Uh uh. It's Conway Twitty. Tyler's
trying to convince us this is still
a drill.

Kazaklis clasps his helmet in both hands as if he is trying to
smother the earphones.

KAZAKLIS

Ty! Ler! (twang! twang!) Ty-
fucking-ler!

RADNOR (v.o.)

Tyler's picked up a radio station.

KAZAKLIS

Get that fucker off!

As Twitty's twang winds down.

TYLER (v.o.)

(serene) I knew you guys were wrong.
They're alive down there. It's a
drill. All of this is simulated.
Just like everything else.

RADIO (v.o.)

OXY! I can tell you where the
acne-causing bacteria are! All over
your face -- lurking, festering,
pimpling all over your face. Buy
OXY today and destroy your zits.

KAZAKLIS

Tyler! Damn you!

TYLER (v.o.)

It's a drill.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RADIO (v.o.)

HEL...lo again. This is Crazy Eddie, stickin' by the phone so you're never alone on Big Boom Night.

Kay...Oh...You...Double You -- In humpin', jumpin', Coquille, Oregon!

TYLER (v.o.)

(confident) It's a drill. Pretty fancy one, isn't it?

Kazaklis pauses for a moment, then explodes.

KAZAKLIS

They're dead, damn you, Tyler! Your wife, your kid, everybody we left behind. Dead, dead, dead. Got that? Dead! You're alive and you got a job to do. Do it! And turn off that fucking radio.

The radio goes silent as does the rest of the plane.

MOREAU

What a jerk.

KAZAKLIS (deadpan)

Conway Twitty or Crazy Eddie? Help me turn this Buff back north.

INT. HELICOPTER -- INFLIGHT -- NIGHT

The helicopter lurches suddenly, half throwing the President into the aisle. The young naval aide catches him.

SEDGEWICK

Fasten your belt, sir. It's going to get rough.

The President looks uncertain.

SEDGEWICK

We're not going to make it to Andrews. We're making a run for it.

PRESIDENT

Run?

SEDGEWICK

It's safest, sir.

PRESIDENT

President doesn't run.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sedgewick fastens his own seat belt.

SEDGEWICK

Mr. President, we've just entered another stage of escalation.

PRESIDENT

What are you talking about?

SEDGEWICK

The second Soviet launch... it was at the Chinese, not us. We kicked things up a level. They just kicked us back. A lot of missiles are flying.

PRESIDENT

Oh my God.

SEDGEWICK

We're going to try to get you to a safe place, sir.

PRESIDENT

I've got to try to turn this thing off, Sedgewick.

SEDGEWICK

Yes, sir.

The President tries to hide his emotion. The whole thing seems to be slipping beyond his control. He looks out the window, his eyes resting on the full winter white moon hovering above the dark horizon. The moon bursts. It bursts into a sun, then into the light of a thousand suns.

INT. B-52 -- INFLIGHT

KAZAKLIS

Let me have a fuel reading, please.

MOREAU (checking)

Two hundred ninety-three thousand pounds.

KAZAKLIS

Roger, two hundred ninety-three thousand pounds. Almost half empty.

MOREAU

More than half-full.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAZAKLIS

Right. Enough for the primary --
Irkutsk, Ulan-Ude, the Angara dam...
not enough to escape over the Chinese
border.

MOREAU

I'm sure we'll hear about a refueling
rendezvous soon. They couldn't have
knocked out the Looking Glass Plane.

Moreau unsnaps her helmet and tries to relax. She sets her helmet
aside and catches her reflection in the picture tube of her radar
screen. She smiles silently to herself, then puts on her radio
headset.

MOREAU

Hey, how's the crazy Irishman doing
back there? (no answer) O'Toole?

We should now cut to whoever is talking at their various stations
aboard the B-52.

Halupalai lifts his hand off his crewmate's closed fist.

HALUPALAI

He's dead, Captain.

MOREAU

Dead?

HALUPALAI

Hypothermia. Shock. Heart attack.
Who knows?

KAZAKLIS

Shit, we needed that. We really
needed that.

MOREAU

Sweet Christ, Kazaklis.

KAZAKLIS

Halupalai. Move O'Toole down to the
catwalk. Radnor. Give him a hand.

INT. B-52 -- GUNNER'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

Halupalai unbuckles himself, then begins the process of unbuckling
O'Toole's stiff body from its harness. Radnor skittishly comes up
from below to help.

INT. B-52 -- NAVIGATOR'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

Tyler ignores the whole proceeding his crewmates struggle to get the body down the ladder. He never looks once as the body is laid out behind him.

Radnor returns to his position next to Tyler while Halupalai returns to his, upstairs.

O'Toole's body has a profound effect on Radnor. He stares at the two V-angled boots, the two legs and the beginning of O'Toole's torso, all bathed in a malevolent red hue.

Now he catches Tyler touching the glossy image of his son -- a Kodak icon that Tyler has pasted above his radar screen. Tyler talks softly to it while his finger caresses the little cherub cheek in the photograph.

Radnor wants to scream, but he doesn't. This whole thing is giving him the jitters. He remembers his own wife and then begins to sob.

After a few moments Radnor calls on his training and with great effort shakes his head, wipes his tears, and begins to work again with his instruments.

INT. B-52 -- GUNNER'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

Halupalai sits at his station staring off into space. As tail gunner he has nothing to do.

KAZAKLIS (v.o.)

Halupalai? You think you can handle O'Toole's toys for us?

HALUPALAI

You bet, Commander. (pause) I, I think I can, Commander.

KAZAKLIS (v.o.)

Congratulations, you have the first battlefield commission of this here war, or whatever it is we're into.

HALUPALAI

I'll take the job, Commander. You keep the bars.

KAZAKLIS (v.o.)

You're never gonna get ahead in this world, sarge.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

Kazaklis motions for Moreau to take the wheel. Then with both hands he takes off his heavy white helmet and replaces it with a head set. He fishes around in his flight jacket for a cigarette.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAZAKLIS

Watch the match.

The light of the match flares briefly in the darkened cockpit.

MOREAU

Afraid you'll blind me?

On the radio suddenly:

KLICKITAT ONE (v.o.)

JIMA 14, JIMA 14. This is Klickitat One. I see ya up there, yank, but I don't hear ya. Aincha got a few words for a lonely Canuck?

KAZAKLIS (to Moreau)

Who the hell is Klickitat One?

MOREAU

Some rattled bush pilot?

KAZAKLIS

No. He's on our frequency. He must be a radar watcher at some fire base. He knows he shouldn't be talking. Check the book. Fast.

Moreau retrieves a two inch book marked in faded black letters:
PROCEDURES -- TOP SECRET.

MOREAU

Ask him, "How's fishing?"

KAZAKLIS

How's fishing?

KLICKITAT ONE (v.o.)

Through the ice. Grayling and Northern Pike.

MOREAU

Reply: "Walleyes not biting, partner?"

KAZAKLIS

Walleyes not biting, partner?

KLICKITAT ONE (v.o.)

Oh, Yank. I'm glad it's you. I've been at this two hours while everybody else is getting drunker than a skunk over at Ruby's. Is it just one of ya's?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KAZAKLIS

This is Polar Bear One.

KLICKITAT ONE (v.o.)

You're it. Elsie's had a change in plans. She's been waiting for you at the corner of Ninth and Easy Streets. Got that? Easy Nin-er.

KAZAKLIS

Easy Nin-er.

Moreau traces E down to 9 on a chart in her book.

MOREAU

Smack dab on the Arctic Circle, Commander. At 124 degrees west longitude.

KAZAKLIS (to Klickitat)

God damn it. I don't think I believe you.

KLICKITAT ONE (v.o.)

Don't damn me, Yank. This is your fuss. We just happen to be your friends passin' on a message. Take it or leave it. Then I'm gonna sit back and wait for the ash to start fallin'.

KAZAKLIS

You know the game. I've gotta take my orders from Omaha or the Looking Glass.

KLICKITAT ONE (v.o.)

Great theory, Yank, but their phone seems to be off the hook at the moment.

KAZAKLIS

I don't believe the Russians took out everything. Not the Looking Glass.

KLICKITAT ONE (v.o.)

You don't need to look up EMP, Electro magnetic pulse, in that book of yours do ya, Yank? Ya had two big booms tonight 100 miles above your prairies.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

KLICKITAT ONE (Cont'd)
Sent out enough voltage to purt near
burn out every vacuum tube and
transistor in America.

KAZAKLIS
O.K. Klickitat, I guess I got a date
on Easy Street.

KLICKITAT ONE (v.o.)
One more thing, Yank. I'd haul ass
if I was you. Elsie's running out
of gas.

KAZAKLIS
The refueling plane is running out
of fuel?

KLICKITAT ONE (v.o.)
Oh, she's got some in the tank for
you, Polar Bear One, just not enough
for both of you.

KAZAKLIS
God. So when's the date?

KLICKITAT ONE (v.o.)
Twenty minutes. I got her headin'
south soon as I picked you up on the
screen.

KAZAKLIS
Thanks, pal. Run on over to Ruby's
and have a drink on me.

KLICKITAT ONE (v.o.)
Naw. I can use the overtime.
Somebody's got to watch the Pole for
you guys. Thumbs up, Yank.

KAZAKLIS
Thumbs up, Canuck.

Kazaklis switches the radio dial to intercom.

KAZAKLIS
O.K., navigator, give me a course
correction for an intercept point
roughly twenty minutes from now.
You got the tanker's coordinates?

No reply is heard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

KAZAKLIS
Tyler?

TYLER (v.o.)
Timmie?

Kazaklis looks at Moreau, despairing. He rubs his cheek abrasively with his glove.

KAZAKLIS
Tyler!

CUT TO:

INT. B-52 -- NAVIGATOR'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

Tyler's eyes are riveted on the photo of his son. Cautiously, Radnor nudges him on the arm.

RADNOR
You want me to do it?

TYLER
Do it?

RADNOR
The Commander needs a new course to the intercept point with the tanker. Did you get the coordinates?

TYLER
Oh, sure. From the ground. Boy, this one is strange. Really strange. From the ground.

RADNOR (worried)
I can do it for you.

TYLER (explosive)
You do your job, Radnor! I'll do mine!

Tyler works professionally over his radar console for a moment.

TYLER
Ten degrees left, sir. Maintain present altitude. Radar contact approximately twelve minutes.

Radnor looks at the seemingly normal Tyler. Then at O'Toole's lifeless boot. Then back to his radar screen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TYLER

Hey, Radnor. I'm sorry I jumped all over you. This one's just kinda getting to me. You know?

RADNOR

Yeah, I know, Pal. Me, too.

TYLER

I'll be glad when it's over. You know what I'm gonna do when we get back? Buy Timmie a bike! Every boy ought to have a bike, don't you think?

On Radnor's expression we

CUT TO:

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

ELSIE (Female v.o. -- much static)

Polar Bear. Polar Bear. Do you read, Polar Bear? This is Elsie. Acknowledge.

MOREAU

Read you now, Elsie. Polar Bear here. Are you Mayday?

ELSIE (v.o. clear now)

Negative, Polar Bear. You'll hear the Mayday soon enough.

MOREAU

Elsie, we need a precise rundown on your condition.

ELSIE (v.o.)

Precision isn't our game tonight, Polar Bear. Our gauges are bouncing like jumping beans. We gotta get that probe in the womb fast. This one's gotta be slam-bam thank-you-ma'am. How much jizz you need?

MOREAU

All we can get, Elsie.

ELSIE (v.o.)

Okay. Now get this, and get this good. When I say breakaway, I mean breakaway. Fast. Certain.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

ELSIE (Cont'd)

No questions. No good-byes and no screw-ups. One of us is going in anyway, screw-up and we take you with us.

MOREAU

Elsie, you got the biggest runway in the world below you. Great Bear Lake oughta be frozen 12 feet thick.

ELSIE (v.o.)

This baby ain't no glider, honey -- and you hotshots got the ejection seats. When the Looking Glass called...

KAZAKLIS (cutting in urgent)

What did the Looking Glass tell you?

ELSIE (v.o.)

Oh, Lordy, a male voice. How nice. I was kinda worried there for a moment that the last flying hump was gonna be with another broad.

KAZAKLIS

The Looking Glass.

ELSIE (v.o.)

Said to give you every drop we got. Coitus interruptus mate.

KAZAKLIS

Back to teen time, Elsie.

ELSIE (v.o.)

Kiddie time, Polar Bear. Anybody who'd let this stuff go is loonier than Captain Kangaroo. Elsie out.

Each crew member now begins to show some fear. Beginning in the basement with Tyler and Radnor, it spreads to Halupalai and Kazaklis. Moreau grabs her forearm at the elbow and pulls toward the wrist, forcing the nerves down to her hand. She repeats with the other arm.

INT. GIRL'S BEDROOM -- FLASHBACK -- DAY

The ten year old Moreau is talking to her uniformed father, GENERAL MOREAU.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GENERAL MOREAU

Honey, it's my job to keep everyone so afraid no one will ever use the bombs again.

YOUNG MOREAU

Why don't we just throw them all away, Dad?

GENERAL MOREAU

It's too late for that, Mo.

YOUNG MOREAU

I'm going to die from it, aren't I?

GENERAL MOREAU

No!

YOUNG MOREAU

That's what all the kids say. Sometimes I have to fight with them.

GENERAL MOREAU

I'm sorry, Mo. I'm sorry you have to fight with your friends. I don't know if you can understand this yet but we're going to need eternal vigilance. Forever, into infinity.

YOUNG MOREAU

Mom said infinity can drive you crazy, Dad.

TYLER (v.o.)

Visual contact!

INT. 6-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

Moreau snaps out of her reverie.

KAZAKLIS (to Moreau)

We have to open the flash screens.

MOREAU

I know.

Kazaklis reaches into his flight bag, pulls out a dirty red bandana and wraps it over his left eye before tying it behind his head. He reaches for his side of the flash curtain. Moreau reaches for hers and they pull. The white radiance of endless snows and an inky black sky streams in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAZAKLIS

Helmets! Okay, Elsie, sweetheart, we are starting our climb. You look beautiful up there, baby, just beautiful.

The KC-135 does look beautiful. Its underside is illuminated and it seems to descend on them like a space platform.

KAZAKLIS

Looking good. Stand by for half mile. All crew on oxygen.

Moreau turns away and looks out the side windows. It looks like a white Sahara.

KAZAKLIS

Closing now, nudge it right. Nudge.

Moreau looks to the front again. The platform is almost on top of them. The tanker's green lit nozzle-probe sways ten feet from the windshield. Like a cobra inches right, inches left.

KAZAKLIS

Doing just fine. Careful now. Careful. Up a bit!

The green lit cobra passes over their helmets.

KAZAKLIS

Now!

INT. B-52 -- ABOVE THE COCKPIT -- INFLIGHT -- NIGHT

CLUNK! We can HEAR the angry WRENCHING OF METAL. SEE the the huge phallic probe lock in just above and behind the cockpit of the B-52.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT -- NIGHT

Kazaklis and Moreau furiously grip their wheels in white-knuckled concentration. The tanker's huge tail looms directly over their heads.

KAZAKLIS

You sure you want to go down to the last drop?

ELSIE (v.o.)

We'll go down to the last drop, Commander.

KAZAKLIS

You got balls, Elsie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELSIE (v.o.)

No, Commander. They issued us everything but those.

KAZAKLIS

Okay. What's your last fuel estimate?

ELSIE (v.o.)

Eight minutes. Ten minutes.

KAZAKLIS

How do you plan to breakaway without power?

ELSIE (v.o.)

I ought to be able to hold it level for a moment.

KAZAKLIS

Got it.

Kazaklis switches the intercom on.

KAZAKLIS

Hey you guys. Keep your mother-lovin' eyes peeled down there. The window's open and we don't need visitors. (to Elsie) Your soulmate on my right will handle the breakaway.

ELSIE (v.o.)

Roger.

Moreau looks at Kazaklis who then reaches up to slowly remove his protective bandana. He trains both eyes on the contrails from Elsie's four engines. Moreau grips the wheel even tighter, the strain beginning to show. The dials on the instrument panel wobble like birthday candles. Kazaklis pushes his visor up and wipes away the sweat in his eyes.

KAZAKLIS

How you doin', co-pilot?

MOREAU

I'll make it. Keep your eye on the road.

Kazaklis looks at his watch 0853 Zulu. A few more moments pass. Moreau really begins to sweat.

INT. SKI CABIN -- FLASHBACK -- TWO WEEKS EARLIER -- DUSK

The grown Moreau and her father have been talking. We pick them up on an embrace.

GENERAL MOREAU

Oh we've practiced incest for almost twenty-five years now, Pop. Incest of the mind.

MOREAU

Some people call it mind-fucking

Moreau laughs. Her father withdraws looking painfully forlorn.

MOREAU

Hey, wait a second, Dad. Let's start over.

GENERAL MOREAU

I want you to stop flying, Mo.

MOREAU

Hey, hey, hey, Dad. You want me to what?

GENERAL MOREAU

It isn't going to work, Mo. We're losing.

Moreau looks at him stunned.

GENERAL MOREAU

Not to the Russians. We're all losing. To the bomb. It's become too big. Too pervasive. Too matter of fact. We're failing, Mo. And you and I are the pawns.

MOREAU

I don't believe this. Not from you. Remember the ten year old, the skinny little kid with the Super Dad. Come on. Eternal vigilance. We made it through your life time while you carried the torch. We'll make it through mine.

GENERAL MOREAU

I was wrong. Nothing goes on forever.

MOREAU

Dad, don't you think it's a little late for this?

GENERAL MOREAU

Very late.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

KAZAKLIS

Thanks for the juice, Elsie. You did great. It's time to do it the easy way.

ELSIE (v.o.)

Hang in there, Commander. You'll thank me later.

Suddenly Kazaklis sees a dark puff from the tanker's number four engine, then there are just three contrails.

KAZAKLIS

NOW! BREAKAWAY!

ELSIE (v.o.)

BREAKAWAY! BREAKAWAY!

Then there are just two contrails. And then only one. The tanker begins to wobble. We HEAR a violent SCRAPING above and behind them. There is a tremendous CLANGING CRASH as the refueling probe smacks into the metal window strut next to Moreau's ear. The probe then scratches along the plexiglass of the cockpit windshield.

MOREAU

No sparks! Please no sparks.

KAZAKLIS

DOWN! DOWN! Take her down.

They are in a deep dive but the tanker tail section is beginning to settle in on them.

KAZAKLIS

Elsie, for Christ's sake get your nose down.

EXT. B-52 AND TANKER PLANE -- INFLIGHT -- NIGHT

The tanker's nose eases over and the tail comes up. For an agonizing moment they are in almost parallel dives.

KAZAKLIS (haunted)

It isn't going to work, Elsie.

Silently, Elsie's right wing tip arches up. And then she spins like a fighter plane, wing tip over wing tip, to the left.

INT. B-52 -- VARIOUS STATIONS -- INFLIGHT

Down in the navigation quarters, Tyler and Radnor watch in silent fascination as a tiny image on their screens twirls downward like a dead mosquito. Poof. Halupalai takes his sweaty hand off the ejection lever over his head.

He looks over at the back of Kazaklis' and Moreau's heads. Kazaklis reaches over to slide back his side of the flash curtain. Moreau looks at him but he won't look at her. Silently she closes her own flash curtain.

INT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE -- INFLIGHT -- 0930 ZULU

MAJOR #1

Polar Bear got the fuel, General.

ALICE

Enough?

MAJOR #1

Marginal.

ALICE

And the tanker?

MAJOR #1

Crashed. Near Great Bear. That leaves fifteen B-52's flying, sir. Half of 'em refueled.

Alice looks up and down the aisle of his command post, a modified Boeing 707 crammed with communications gear and a crew of twenty frantically working to patch things up.

ALICE

What about communications?

MAJOR #1

Only the ultra-low frequency seems to be working consistently. Of the other forty-two systems on board, sir, two or three work intermittently, the rest are still down.

ALICE

What the hell is with Harpoon?
Is he down?

MAJOR #1

Five minutes ago. It's very high risk. There are mobs at every airport in the country.

ALICE

Troops deployed?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAJOR #1

Several battalions. It's the Soviet subs that worry me. They have standing orders to fire their missiles before they're sunk. We had a couple of 'em cornered in the Gulf when the EMP wave hit.

ALICE

You think Baton Rouge would be on their list?

MAJOR #1

Could be. It's a damned risky landing. I don't know if I would have taken the chance, General.

ALICE

We still got a little document called the Constitution, Sam.

MAJOR #1

Sir, we're not even sure Harpoon's after the right guy.

ALICE

What are we sure of, dammit? Plan says don't fart around. Get the most likely and get him fast.

EXT. E-4 -- BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA AIRPORT

A white phosphorous flare illuminates the outline of the E-4 Presidential command plane through the smoke and drizzle. Buildings and vehicles are on fire. You can HEAR RIFLE FIRE and AUTOMATIC WEAPONS.

A loading ramp doesn't quite reach the high door of the E-4. Harpoon stands in the aircraft's doorway attempting to hoist a man the final few feet to the darkened entrance.

HARPOON

Mr. President?

CONDOR (breathing hard)

Barely. Just barely.

HARPOON

Are you injured, sir? Do you need assistance?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONDOR

No, no. Just get the others aboard so we can get our tails out of here before the whole state of Louisiana rushes us.

HARPOON

How many others?

CONDOR

Four.

Harpoon gestures to a Captain.

HARPOON (to Captain)

Get those four aboard and seal this bird up fast. (to Condor) No time for pomp tonight, sir. Would you please follow me?

INT. E-4 -- BATON ROUGE AIRPORT -- CONTINUOUS

The interior of the E-4 is second nature to Harpoon but disorienting to Condor. They walk past compartments containing men and women swarming over mazes of wires, cables and loose data boards.

CONDOR

Lord A'mighty. Harry Truman said he felt like a bale of hay landed on him. Must say I feel like I got the whole barn.

HARPOON

Afraid so, sir. Maybe more.

CONDOR

How bad is it?

HARPOON

Bad?

CONDOR

We losin'?

HARPOON

I'm not sure that's the issue, Mr. President. You need to be briefed.

They climb a spiral staircase to the baby-blue Presidential compartment.

CONDOR

Not the issue? Believe me, mister, winning and losing are the only issues. I don't need a briefing to know that.

INT. B-52 -- VARIOUS STATIONS -- INFLIGHT

KAZAKLIS
O.K. Mission planning. Irkutsk.
Targets?

TYLER
Targets? Satellite-tracking station,
heavy industry, electronics...

KAZAKLIS
Population?

MOREAU
Kazaklis!

TYLER
Just under a million.

KAZAKLIS
Yeah, Irkutsk gets the big banana.
One megaton, ground burst. Low
level. Approaching. On the
racetrack.

TYLER
On the racetrack. Entry plus two
niner-zero. Calibration two
niner-zero. Midpoint two-four-zero.
Exit two-eight zero. Coming up on
twenty seconds. Ready...ready...Now!

KAZAKLIS
Hokay, straight down Karl Marx
Street.

Pause.

TYLER
Ten seconds.

KAZAKLIS
...Five. Four. Three. Two. One.
(to Moreau) And? (silence) And?

MOREAU (urgent)
Pull up, pushover.

KAZAKLIS (quietly)
Bomb away...Bye--bye Irkutsk.
Bye-bye little mamushkas.

A sudden wave of emotion floods the cockpit. No one says anything for a moment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HALUPALAI

That was an excellent exercise, sir.
We are now seventy-five miles from
our P.C.P.

INT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE -- INFLIGHT

MAJOR #1

General, Polar Bear One is only
seventy-five miles from its Positive
Control Point. Are you going to
order them to go in?

ALICE

What's with Baton Rouge, Sam?

MAJOR #1

They're still on the ground, sir.
No radio contact.

ALICE

I shouldn't make this decision, Sam.
I'm not even sure it's legal.

MAJOR #1

It's legal, sir. Under P.D. 58.

ALICE

Screw Presidential Directive 58.
It puts me in charge only if there's
no constitutional successor. We may
have one on the ground in Louisiana.
(pause) I don't want to make this
decision, Sam.

MAJOR #1

I know, sir.

ALICE

I'm not sure if it's right.

MAJOR #1

It's debatable, General.

ALICE

I know it's debatable. That's the
point.

EXT. WOODS NEAR WASHINGTON -- NIGHT

Sedgewick lies dazed in a gully. It is very cold. A section of
Nighthawk One rests nearby, as does the blanket-covered body of the
President. The President unconscious but alive.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sedgewick opens his eyes. He hears strange violent SOUNDS in the distance. He tries to move but both his legs are broken. He looks around, confused, and sees a nine year old black boy staring at him. The boy runs away.

SEDGEWICK

Wait! Don't go. Please. I've got the President here.

He falls back unconscious from the exertion.

EXT. E-4 -- BATON ROUGE AIRPORT -- NIGHT

The engines rev up as the plane begins to taxi away. Soldiers ringing the plane OPEN FIRE as cover for the departing aircraft.

INT. E-4 -- PRESIDENTIAL COMPARTMENT -- BATON ROUGE --

Inside the baby blue compartment with its Presidential seal, we find an odd assortment sitting in swivel chairs waiting for take-off: Harpoon, Condor (the Successor), a backwoods Louisiana Judge, and the pudgy Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service. Standing behind this group with his uzi submachine gun at port arms is a grey-flanneled Secret Service agent.

CONDOR

How'd the President get it?

HARPOON

In Nighthawk One, sir. They were on their way to Andrews when it went. We assume they were crushed in the blast wave.

CONDOR

Assume?

HARPOON

Sir, you don't go looking for bodies in this kind of war. You don't find them.

The plane swerves sharply, causing one of the secret servicemen to stagger almost losing his weapon.

HARPOON

Sir, those men must sit down. If one of those weapons goes off...

CONDOR (cutting in)

How does the Commander-in-Chief talk to his troops?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARPOON

Our communications are out except for some primitive messages we can get to the bombers through Alice.

CONDOR

Alice?

HARPOON

The Looking Glass Plane, sir. The Strategic Air Command's airborne command post. They're a thousand miles north of us and our only link to anything now.

CONDOR

Harpoon, they call you?

HARPOON

My code name, sir.

CONDOR

How many warheads they hit us with?

HARPOON

About 2,000, sir. Probably 2,500 megatons.

CONDOR

What did we hit them with?

HARPOON

About the same, sir. Somewhat less megatonnage.

CONDOR

Deaths?

HARPOON

Millions. Americans and Russians. A relatively even exchange.

CONDOR

A relatively even exchange.

The white light on the phone next to Harpoon blinks.

HARPOON

Excuse me, sir.

He picks up the phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HARPOON

The Looking Glass saw it? All 16 tubes? Then go man, go.

The plane lurches, left. The agent falls to his knees dropping his weapon.

HARPOON

Oh my God...take it over the top of them. Yes, pilot. Over the top of them.

The plane accelerates to take off. It keeps hitting bumps on the runway.

CONDOR

Why didn't they clear that crap off the runway?

HARPOON

That crap, sir, is my troops. Your troops on their bellies, shooting their own people to clear a path for this aircraft.

Bump...bump, bump...bump.

The Successor just stares at Harpoon numbly.

HARPOON

Do you realize a Soviet submarine has just launched a missile in the direction of this aircraft?

The plane lifts off.

HARPOON

(into phone) Ten miles. Port side? Aft? (to Secret Service) You! Down! Propped against the bulkheads! Hands off weapons! (into phone) Seven miles. You got me there, pal. This is Russian goddamn roulette...O.K. HARD RIGHT! FULL POWER! HARD RIGHT!

The plane suddenly turns on its side. The Secret Service agent goes flying and slams into the back of a chair. The aircraft groans under the stress.

The plane lurches up and down. A few moments pass. Harpoon braces himself again, waiting for the next surge. It doesn't come. He reaches for the phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HARPOON

What gives? I'll be damned. We got a dud. Take her all the way up.

The backwoods judge slumps forward in the seat next to Harpoon. A Bible falls out of his hand. The blue fabric of his chair is shredded, white stuffing coming out of little holes. The holes match holes in the back of the judge's shirt, now stained red. The Agent rises shakily from behind the chair. His gun is still slightly smoking. Harpoon looks at the Successor and finds a face full of dumbfounded shock and horror.

INT. B-52 -- NAVIGATOR'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

TYLER

Hey, Radnor?

Radnor stares into his radar screen trying to ignore Tyler.

TYLER

Hey, Radnor. I'm serious. I'll go halfway with you. I'll say it happened. I will. I promise you. But you gotta go halfway with me.

Radnor fingers a #2 pencil and continues to block Tyler out.

TYLER

Talk to me, buddy. Radnor, please. Radnor!

RADNOR (quietly)

Shut up, Tyler.

TYLER

Radnor, go halfway with me. Just say Timmie isn't dead. Forget my wife, Radnor, please.

Radnor snaps his pencil in two from the tension, then turns to Tyler's grotesque and mournful face.

TYLER

Just Timmie. You don't have to say anything about my wife. Radnor. You don't.

Radnor feels woozy. He jams the jagged end of the broken pencil against his palm. Hard. Till the skin breaks.

TYLER

Forget my wife.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Laura! RADNOR (bursting)

Radnor raises his palm above the jagged pencil. It appears he's going to smash his palm down on the pencil as if it were a spindle.

CUT TO:

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

The red light from the flight panel throbs hypnotically. Both Moreau and Kazaklis are lost in their own private thoughts. Radnor's shriek cuts through their earphones jerking them both to attention.

INT. B-52 -- NAVIGATORS STATION -- INFLIGHT

Radnor smashes his fist down on the work table in front of Tyler. Blood spurts across the navigation charts. Tyler rears far back in his seat. Tears stream down his face.

TYLER
I spanked him, Radnor.

Radnor slams his hand down again and again. Suddenly out of his peripheral vision hue picks up the first white intrusion on Tyler's radar screen. Then a second and a third creep forward. Radnor relaxes his hand, pulls back to his position and says calmly into the all-channels radio.

RADNOR
Incognitos. Incognitos at twelve o'clock.

INT. B-52 -- VARIOUS STATIONS -- CONTINUOUS

KAZAKLIS
Not up here they're not. Them's bandits. Distance. Velocity.

RADNOR
Hundred miles. Fast. Mach two-plus. Darned near mach three.

KAZAKLIS
No, no. Check again.

RADNOR
Affirmative. 1800 miles per hour. Three, correction, four bandits.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAZAKLIS

Battle stations. Helmets! Oxygen!
Defense! Jamming! Chaff! Shovel
that stuff like hay, gunner. We
better look like an armada. Decoys
ready?

RADNOR

Eighty miles...seventy...

KAZAKLIS

Must be Foxbats. (to Moreau) Specs?

MOREAU

Top speed, mach two point eight.
Range 1500 miles, one way.

KAZAKLIS

Armaments?

MOREAU

Four AA-ACRID air to air missiles.
Heat-seekers, range feels miles.
Four radar guided missiles, range
twenty miles. They'll use both.
Gunpacks. Two twenty-three
millimeter machine guns.

KAZAKLIS

Evasive action.

RADNOR

Fifty miles...Forty miles. Missiles
launched! One. Two. Six launches.

We SEE on Radnor's radar screen six little blips with four larger
ones swooping ahead of the missiles and climbing.

RADNOR

Bandits. Twenty miles and climbing.

KAZAKLIS

Yeah they screwed up. They were up
our tail pipe before they saw us.
They're trying to eat speed.

Kazaklis glances at his altimeter -- it's falling. Moreau has begun
to take the Buff down.

EXT. FOUR FOXBATS -- IN FORMATION -- NIGHT

We SEE the Foxbats in climbing formation fire four new missiles.
The missiles do a U-turn in unison heading down.

INT. B-52 -- VARIOUS STATIONS -- INFLIGHT

RADNOR

New missile launches! One. Two.
Four missile launches.

KAZAKLIS

Radar guided missiles approaching.
More chaff!

Halupalai dumps more tinfoil. His palms sweating. On his screen he sees the first six blips approaching. His hand instinctively reaches up for the ejection lever. Quickly he removes his hand and curses himself for the old habit.

EXT. B-52 -- INFLIGHT -- NIGHT

The first missile is almost on top of them. The Buff rocks back and forth. Then POOF, the first missile explodes harmlessly in one of the heat flares. Then the next and the next in rapid succession.

INT. B-52 -- GUNNER'S STATION - INFLIGHT

Halupalai sees the last of the intruders dart left, sucked into the heat of one of his decoy flares.

HALUPALAI

Hot shit!

KAZAKLIS

Hang on to your muu-muu back there,
ace. Four more coming.

Halupalai's exuberance fades instantly. He releases more tin foil chaff which creates strange dancing snow patterns on his radar screen.

EXT. B-52 -- INFLIGHT -- NIGHT

We SEE the tin foil patches spreading out behind the plane. The missiles appear. Then begin to move raggedly after the tin foil ghosts.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

KAZAKLIS

Let'er rip, gunner. You just made
it to the Super Bowl.

MOREAU

There's still four MIGs out there
with more missiles.

Kazaklis looks at the altimeter again. 9,000, 8,000... He pulls the flash curtain open on his side. Starlight shimmers off ice and snow. Tension surges into him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAZAKLIS

I'll take it now, Captain.

The B-52 heads down to low level where they have some slim chance to evade the MIGs.

INT. E-4 -- BRIEFING ROOM -- INFLIGHT

On one wall there are three computerized maps. One of the U.S. One of the Soviet Union. One Mercator map of world. The compartment is like a spotless oval boardroom. Around a table sit six Air Force Generals and a single prim Colonel. Condor sits at the head of the table. Harpoon is lecturing in front of the maps.

HARPOON

Our ICBMs were launched in two waves. Most of our bombers were caught on the ground. Those bombers that survived should be at their positive control points. If ordered to go in they will reach their targets in four to six hours. The bulk of our submarine forces, in which we carry most of our destructive power, was placed on hold for exactly eleven hours. Seven hours from now their instructions are to hit their targets unless they receive contrary orders. The assumption is: If they can't hear us, then we're still at war. The subs would constitute our third strike and complete the destruction of the Soviet Union.

CONDOR

You find fault in that, Harpoon?

HARPOON

They have a system of their own, sir. They put most of their warheads in land based ICBMS and most of those are still unused. In a few hours their bombers are going to be roaming at will throughout this country taking out our cities. A few hours later our subs will take out theirs.

COLONEL JONES

Come on, Admiral, those bombers are so old most of them have propellers. Even the Minnesota Air National Guard could knock them down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARPOON

Colonel, would you like to go to the phone and order them into the air? We can't even talk to Minneapolis. Every transistor in Minnesota is burned out. We won't be able to stop half of them and they're going to pick off their targets one by one. Goddamned one. New York, Philadelphia, Denver...

CONDOR

And our bombers will do the same thing.

HARPOON

No. The bombers that did get off will be under attack by Soviet fighter interceptors.

CONDOR

The Soviets can attack our bombers and we can't attack theirs?

HARPOON

Sir, they had the element of surprise and they spent a lot of money on bomber defenses, as we wanted them to. Wasting money on defenses for a war with no defense.

CONDOR

This is the most cockamamie, defeatist thing I've ever heard. What about the subs? How many warheads we got in there?

HARPOON

About 7,000, sir.

CONDOR

Launch 'em -- before the Soviet planes hit our cities.

HARPOON

I understand your frustration, sir, but that's an impossible order.

CONDOR

You refuse a direct order?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HARPOON

I can't order the submarines to do anything. Nor can you. They received orders hours ago to run silent and deep, away from detection or communications for eleven hours. Then the main part of the fleet will come back near the surface to listen. If they hear nothing they will fire. That's the system. The Soviets know the system as well as we do. They know if their bombers strike, if they send off more ICBMs, they're dead. Because there'll be no one left and no reason to call off the submarines.

CONDOR

You're telling me the fate of our nation rests with a dead computer?

HARPOON

Well not quite, sir. The war plans were devised with a purpose. Both sides knew if this thing ever got started, we'd have tremendous problems with ego, national pride, communications. So we built in pauses. Bombers are very slow. They are a built-in natural pause to the war. We are in that pause, but coming to the end of it.

CONDOR

And the pause was designed to do precisely what?

HARPOON

To give us time to patch our communications, sir. And to give you and your Soviet counterpart time to think things over and maybe find a way to turn the war off. You have a copy of the Premier's message in the folder in front of you. I don't know what to make of it but he offered to accept an equal amount of damage in the Soviet Union.

CONDOR (sarcastically)

A relatively even exchange.

COLONEL JONES

A historic, strategic blunder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HARPOON

I can't assess his motives. I can only tell you that I think our best option is to turn some of our bombers and see how the Soviets respond. We'll still have the subs in reserve. Really, sir, I think it's our only option right now.

COLONEL JONES

Bullshit! There is another option. God damn it. We can cut the head off the chicken. Tell him about the chicken.

EXT. FROZEN TERRAIN UNDER A NIGHT SKY

The B-52 whizzes by, not 200 feet off the ground. A few seconds later the four Foxbats close in for the certain kill.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT -- NIGHT

Kazaklis is down to low level and seems to ignore the Foxbats. He flies mechanically following Tyler's instructions.

TYLER (v.o.)

O.K. High terrain, three miles and it's significant. Up a bit. Down a bit. Little more. Hard left. Good.

MOREAU

They're taking their own sweet time, aren't they?

TYLER (v.o.)

Bandits, eight miles and closing.

KAZAKLIS

Cat's got the mouse, and he's playing. They'll close a couple more miles. All they gotta do is stay away from Halupalai's guns.

MOREAU

Don't imagine that has 'em terrified.

KAZAKLIS

No. Not four of 'em with six missiles left.

MOREAU

You gave it a classy run through the hills, Kazaklis.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They go quiet. The BOMBER NOISE RATTLES through their silence like a tin can full of loose pebbles. Kazaklis taps the throttles up a bit.

EXT. B-52 -- WHITE WILDERNESS -- LOW LEVEL

We SEE the sweeping, swaying evasive maneuvers. The Buff comes down as low as 25 feet off the ground.

EXT. FOXBATS

The four Foxbats press relentlessly towards us.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

Kazaklis chuckles.

KAZAKKLIS

What if I put this hunk in a loop and came back on top of 'em? Maybe they'd all die of heart attacks.

MOREAU

The wings would snap like twigs.

KAZAKKLIS

Maybe the shrapnel would get 'em.

MOREAU

Yeah. Maybe.

KAZAKKLIS

Sure surprise the shit out of 'em.

MOREAU

Kazaklis, you were born a couple generations too late. You should have been a barnstormer, defying death and deformity for the hayseeds in Iowa.

KAZAKKLIS

Woulda' lived longer.

TYLER (v.o.)

You have significant terrain ten o'clock. High terrain at three o'clock. High terrain seven miles dead ahead.

MOREAU

(suddenly angry) God damn it! How did we screw up?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAZAKLIS

The odds were a hundred to one.

TYLER (v.o.)

High terrain five miles ahead.

Moreau freezes for a moment.

MOREAU

High terrain. Tyler's high terrain.
That's it!

Kazaklis looks at her strangely.

MOREAU

Arm the first bomb: Arm bomb one,
damn it.

KAZAKLIS

That's crazy.

MOREAU

Not as crazy as doing a loop, Waldo
Pepper. Do it fast.

Kazaklis looks at his instruments. Then back to Moreau his quizzical expression changes into the broadest grin imaginable.

KAZAKLIS

Moreau, you're too goddamn smart to
die so young. Tyler, are the
Russians flying in formation?

TYLER (v.o.)

They're closing fast, Commander.

KAZAKLIS

Are they flying in formation, damn
it?

TYLER (v.o.)

Yes, sir.

KAZAKLIS

Hokay, you guardians of democracy,
secure the family jewels again. Our
buddy with no jewels to lose has come
up with a real ball buster.

Kazaklis punches the bomb codes into the cypher box next to him.

EXT. B-52 -- LOW LEVEL -- NIGHT

The plane banks left toward a ridge in the distance. The Foxbats follow.

INT. E-4 -- BRIEFING ROOM -- INFLIGHT

Harpoon passes the light pointer to Colonel Jones who addresses the group.

COLONEL JONES

I will keep my words brief, clear, and devoid of defeatist philosophy. Victory is possible, sir, and it's not all that complicated. To call back our bombers would not move the Soviets. They would see it as a sign of weakness. We have an opportunity to allow the Soviet people to throw off the yoke of totalitarian dictatorship which has oppressed them so long. They will do it as surely as they overthrew the Czars during the First World War.

HARPOON

For Christ's sake, Colonel, they don't even know where their leaders are.

COLONEL JONES

No, Admiral, they do not. But we do. And you would withdraw the very weapon with which we would do it.

The Colonel orders a change in the Soviet computer map.

COLONEL JONES

Mr. President, these green dots represent Soviet leadership bunkers. Inside those bunkers are the party hierarchy, the Presidium, KGB leaders, military commanders, and almost surely the Russian Premier. They are the head of the Soviet chicken. Cut off that head and the body dies. The system dies. Forever.

CONDOR

You telling me a handful of B-52s can do that?

COLONEL JONES

The perfect instrument, sir. ICBMs or sub launched missiles aren't accurate enough for certainty. B-52s are manned. They can drop a load right down a smoke stack. We can order our B-52s on a grand tour of the Soviet Union.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONDOR

Harpoon?

HARPOON

It's madness, sir.

CONDOR

Seems we got madness piled on top of madness tonight.

HARPOON

Colonel, what about the Soviet bombers? What about the thousands of warheads they have in land based reserves?

COLONEL JONES

Victory has its price, Admiral. We are in a war, sir, a nuclear war. I suggest it's time we started thinking about how to win it. No smoke signal is going to stop Soviet bombers. But we do have some fighters and we also have thousands of commercial jets available. We can ram the bastards.

HARPOON

You're joking?

CONDOR

Wait a minute, Harpoon. Is it possible? Can ramming be a defense against bombers?

HARPOON

Sir, for God's sake...

CONDOR

Is it possible!

HARPOON

In isolated cases, sir. They have 150 bombers coming in at low level from all directions.

CONDOR

Don't think I've been getting the whole story here. I don't cotton to that. I don't cotton to that at all.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HARPOON

This is nonsense. What are we supposed to do about the ICBMs? There's no defense against this stuff.

COLONEL JONES

The defense is the Soviet people. Take away these green dots and they will stop the ICBMs. The defense is to cut the head off the chicken.

EXT. B-52 -- INFLIGHT

The bomb bay doors open.

TYLER (v.o.)

Thirty second mark. Ready. Ready. Now. On the racetrack.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

On the instrument panel. Three yellow squares are lit in a sequence of four. They are: Bomb doors not locked, bomb doors open, bomb doors not closed and locked.

TYLER (v.o.)

Significant terrain twelve o'clock. Bandits 5.5 miles and closing.

Kazaklis nudges the B-52 up and over the last ridge where it disappears for a few moments from the Foxbats.

A fire proof gloved thumb is poised on the last unlit button.

KAZAKLIS

Five. Four. Three. Two. One.

The thumb depresses the button which lights up: BOMBS RELEASED.

Halupalai sits at his station feeling helpless and alone. Kazaklis and Moreau pull their flash screens over the windows. Radnor steals glances at Tyler who has become wooden and mechanical.

TYLER

Plus fifteen seconds. Bandits five miles and closing.

In the cockpit Kazaklis and Moreau count in synchronization with Tyler.

KAZAKLIS

Plus twenty-five.

MOREAU

Plus twenty-five.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAZAKLIS
Come on, baby. Come on.

TYLER (v.o.)
Plus thirty seconds.

KAZAKLIS
Blow damn you, blow!

TYLER (v.o.)
Detonation.

MOREAU
Climb! Climb! Climb!

KAZAKLIS
Launches?

TYLER (v.o.)
Plus forty seconds.

KAZAKLIS
Bandits?

TYLER (v.o.)
Plus forty-five.

KAZAKLIS
Tyler! Damn you! Bandits!?

TYLER (v.o.)
Plus fifty seconds.

RADNOR (v.o.)
It's not Tyler, sir. (pause) Oh God
in heaven.

INT. B-52 -- NAVIGATOR'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

RADNOR
There's nothing to see, Commander.

On Radnor's screen a white ball expands like a malignant brain.
The rest of the screen warps in dancing zig-zag lines.

TYLER
Plus sixty seconds.

Radnor knows they are about to be hit with the blast wave and braces
himself.

EXT. B-52

A THUNDER CRACK snaps at the aircraft. The Buff rises like a
feather, sinks, then rises again. The RIVETS GROAN.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION

Kazaklis and Moreau struggle to hold onto the Buff with white knuckled intensity. A few beats and then it is past.

KAZAKLIS

(to Moreau) Friendly little kick
in the rump, huh? (to navigator)
Bandits?

RADNOR

Nothing came through that, Commander,
nothing.

The altimeter reads 6,000 feet. A few beats of silence. Suddenly Kazaklis starts to bank the plane to the left.

MOREAU

What are you doing?

KAZAKLIS

I'm gonna take a look.

MOREAU

No, I don't want to see it.

KAZAKLIS

Take it, Captain.

Moreau hesitates, then takes the wheel. Slowly Kazaklis pulls back his curtain.

The Arctic night is not dark. In the kittywumpis tilt of the aircraft window, the horizon cuts diagonally one way and the majestic stem of the cloud the other. Lightning strikes purple and violet, dart throughout the pillar. The pillar is twelve miles high, made up of radioactive gasses which look like snakes coiling on each other, devouring each other. It is satanic.

MOREAU

Oh, Kazaklis. It was so easy.

KAZAKLIS

Yeah.

MOREAU

On a city, too?

KAZAKLIS

Yeah.

INT. E-4 -- BRIEFING ROOM -- INFLIGHT

Alone, Harpoon is meticulously shooting rubber bands across the room. Condor enters with Colonel Jones and the Secret Service agent.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONDOR

Need to send the orders. I want the Grand Tour, Harpoon.

HARPOON

You've decided, sir.

CONDOR

History won't wait.

HARPOON

I hope history hears you. Good luck, sir.

Harpoon picks up the satchel he carried out of the bunker in Omaha and starts to leave.

CONDOR

You think I'll need it, Harpoon.

HARPOON

Oh yes, sir. We all need it tonight.

CONDOR

Where are you going?

HARPOON

To my quarters, sir.

COLONEL JONES

Haven't you forgotten something, Admiral?

He gestures towards Harpoon's satchel.

COLONEL JONES

The card.

Harpoon opens his satchel and takes out what looks like a blue and red charge card. Across the top is a series of random letters and numbers. In the middle it says: TOP SECRET CRYPTO. NSA. At the bottom it says: SEALED AUTHENTICATOR SYSTEM.

HARPOON

You'll need this. Orders to the bombers must go through the Looking Glass Plane. The code at the top will prove you're authentic. The Colonel will give you the word codes.

CONDOR

You really forgot to give me this, Harpoon?

HARPOON

(beat) I'm really not sure, sir.

EXT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE -- INFLIGHT -- NIGHT

Establishing shot.

INT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE -- CONTINUOUS

Alice takes a cigarette from a pack in a cubbyhole in front of him. His station is like a small desk with a red lockbox and countdown clock. He snaps a match with his fingernail and the phone lights up.

ALICE
Alice here.
CONDOR (v.o.)
Condor speakin'.

ALICE
Day word?
CONDOR (v.o.)
Cottonmouth.

ALICE
Command word?
CONDOR (v.o.)
Trinity.

ALICE
Action word?
CONDOR (v.o.)
Jericho.

Alice takes out his blue and red authenticator card.

ALICE
You have your card, sir.
CONDOR (v.o.)
I do.

ALICE
In the upper left-hand corner, you see a row of digits and letters. Please read the fourth from the left.

CONDOR (v.o.)
Seven.

ALICE
In the right-hand corner, please read me the final three digits and/or letters.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONDOR (v.o.)
Seven. Cee. Two.

ALICE
Cee for what, sir?

Condor pauses for a beat and grunts.

CONDOR (v.o.)
Charlie.

ALICE
On the second line from the top
please read me the middle sentence.

CONDOR (v.o.)
Six. Dee. Six. Two.

ALICE
Dee for what, sir?

CONDOR (v.o.)
Dammit. All you people waiting on
World War IV, Alice?

ALICE
You wish to issue order changes, sir?

CONDOR (v.o.)
Sure as hell do.

ALICE
Harpoon give you the signal code?

CONDOR (v.o.)
He's temporarily incapacitated.

ALICE
Incapacitated?

CONDOR (v.o.)
(uncomfortable) That's right.

Alice takes a long thoughtful drag on his cigarette.

ALICE
Would you like some advice, sir?

CONDOR (v.o.)
Been gettin' plenty down here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALICE

I'm sure, sir, but the situation's fluid. The first coded message has come in from the ground. It's garbled but coded. Means it's part of the system.

CONDOR (v.o.)

Where from?

ALICE

Not sure, sir. Washington region.

CONDOR (v.o.)

That's good news. Now I'm ordering Two One Zebra.

ALICE

We're getting things back, sir. I'd orbit and wait.

CONDOR (v.o.)

Orbit and wait? Just a minute, I'll ask the Colonel.

ALICE

The Colonel?

Condor is not listening. He's talking to the Colonel.

CONDOR (v.o.)

Colonel says we don't have the gas, Alice.

ALICE

Sir, with all respect, I'd run this by Harpoon first or at least talk to your senior communications officer.

CONDOR (v.o.)

Alice, implement Two One Zebra.

ALICE

(pause) Yes, sir. It'll take a few minutes, sir.

CONDOR (v.o.)

You stallin', Alice?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ALICE

No, sir. We have to do a hand sort. New assignments, priorities and alternates. It's tight. I have to put them in orbit briefly, so none of them go over the side.

CONDOR (v.o.)

Over the side?

ALICE

We're saying too much, sir. Out of listening range.

CONDOR (v.o.)

Okay. Now get your tail moving. Fast.

The PHONE CLICKS off. Major #1 comes up behind Alice.

ALICE

We got 21-Zebra.

MAJOR #1

Jesus, you're kidding.

ALICE

I wish I was.

MAJOR #1

The crews will think we're going nuts back here.

ALICE

Well?

INT. B-52 -- INFLIGHT

A few beats of silence save for the droning engines. Each person is lost in his thoughts. Suddenly the SOUND of their TELETYPE startles everyone.

Kazaklis stubs out a cigarette. Moreau cranes her neck and watches in puzzlement as the machine types one short line and stops.

Halupalai comes slowly from his station, tears off the message, and hands it to Kazaklis.

HALUPALAI

You want me to translate the code?

KAZAKLIS

Tell me what I already know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HALUPALAI (reading)
"Orbit. Await orders." I'll take
it downstairs, Commander.

KAZAKLIS
Don't bother.

HALUPALAI
Commander?

KAZAKLIS
Don't bother.

Halupalai shrugs and slouches back to his seat.

MOREAU
Take it easy on him. You'll have
the whole crew ready for the rubber
room.

KAZAKLIS
Do me a favor, Moreau. Bank the
Doomsday Express left. Then shut
up for awhile, will ya? Huh?

Moreau bristles but follows orders. Kazaklis looks at his watch:
1100 ZULU. He looks at Moreau again. Tries to lighten the mood.

KAZAKLIS
You ever kick your dog, Moreau?

MOREAU
(beat)...I don't have a dog.

KAZAKLIS
I love my dog. But sometimes I kick
him.

Moreau looks at him. Shakes her head. Says nothing.

KAZAKLIS
Get the feeling we're going round
in circles?

MOREAU
You get the feeling we shouldn't
complete this circle?

The remark surprises Kazaklis a little. He tries to recover.

KAZAKLIS
Reminds me of a Polish joke.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MOREAU

Oh, Christ, Kazaklis.

KAZAKLIS

These two Polish pilots get into trouble. So the pilot says to the co-pilot, 'Let's do a 360 and get out of here.'

Kazaklis laughs. Moreau doesn't.

MOREAU

Kazaklis, do you ever think about the reliability regulations?

KAZAKLIS

Oh God, Moreau. Don't start on PRP now.

MOREAU

Why don't you think about it?

KAZAKLIS

Because it's crazier than what we're doing.

MOREAU

About even Steven, I'd say. How come the politicians don't have to prove that they're sane? You ever hear of a Presidential candidate going down to San Antonio to take the test they give to us? You think the Politburo's got psychological screening, or whatever they call it there?

KAZAKLIS

None of 'em woulda passed.

MOREAU

Yeah, it's hard to find perfect people. None of us passed tonight.

KAZAKLIS

Moreau, did the drinking really bother you that much? All the flyin' we did together?

MOREAU

Kazaklis. You were always full of more shit than booze.

INT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE -- INFLIGHT

Knots of people are compiling packets of new targets and new target priorities for the eleven remaining B-52s.

Alice goes over the targets assigned to Polar Bear I. On top the target is: CHEREPOVETS: [RYBINSK MINING WORKS], Construction 1977. Primary relocation site Soviet Premier, Chief KGB, Minister Defense, Commanding General Soviet Rocket Forces. Hardened at least 1,000 psi.

Alice doesn't like this at all. He looks over to Major #1 who has been staring at him. Alice looks down at his papers again then looks up.

ALICE

You about ready, Sam?

MAJOR #1

Yes, sir. We have the orders plotted.

ALICE

(beat) Then send 'em, dammit.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

We can HEAR the last SOUNDS of the on board TELETYPE fading. Halupalai is standing between Kazaklis and Moreau having just decoded the orders that Kazaklis is holding.

KAZAKLIS

What the hell is Two-One Zebra?

Moreau reaches for her master book and rapidly flips through it. She stops at a rarely used appendix and lets out a whoosh of air. She turns to Kazaklis, says nothing.

KAZAKLIS

Damn you, Moreau, what's going on?

MOREAU

The grand tour that's what's going on. We're going across Russia to carve'm out in the craters.

KAZAKLIS

Carve what out?

MOREAU

Not what. Who.

She turns back to her book.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOREAU

Twenty-one. Precision nuclear bombing, hardened emplacements. Zebra-Political/military infrastructure.

She turns the page, breaks the plastic seal engraved with the faint outline of an eagle and reads the instructions.

MOREAU

Cherepovets (Rybinsk Mine) -- Caution. This is not an opportunity target. Strike only on direct orders NCA. Relocation area. Timing option one. Omega.

Kazaklis lets out a low whistle.

KAZAKLIS

Leadership bunkers. So they really want us to go after the big bananas.

MOREAU

More like somebody's gone bananas. Somebody who didn't go to San Antonio for reliability training or read the suicide regs. They want us to get the leaders. Then who's left to turn this fucker off?

She pauses, tries to read Kazaklis' face.

MOREAU

Request confirmation.

KAZAKLIS

You just get promoted?

Then he relents and motions to Halupalai to send the order.

Kazaklis begins to think about what these orders mean. He thinks fast. Moreau just keeps staring at him. Finally.

KAZAKLIS

You find a wart on my nose, Moreau?

MOREAU

You know, Kazaklis.

KAZAKLIS

I know it means we don't have to go in and drop a million tons of TNT on a bunch of kids, Moreau. Isn't that better, for God's sake?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MOREAU

You mean more satisfying.

KAZAKLIS

Damn right it's more satisfying.
Maybe it'll get over faster.

MOREAU

Faster?

Halupalai appears again handing the pilot another message: CONFIRM
TWO ONE ZEBRA. NCA CODE HENHOUSE.

KAZAKLIS (to Moreau)

Look up henhouse.

She doesn't move. They stare at each other for a moment.

MOREAU

They want us to vaporize the
Premier, Kazaklis. And the
Presidium. And the head of the KGB.
Anybody with any control.

KAZAKLIS

The bastards started it, look up
henhouse.

Moreau holds the steady gaze.

KAZAKLIS

You want us to nuke kids instead,
huh?

MOREAU

Somebody's got to be at the other
end of the phone, Kazaklis.

KAZAKLIS

What phone? You think they're
talking to each other and sending
out orders like this?

MOREAU

You know what comes next?

KAZAKLIS

What the hell do you want me to do?
Write my congressman?

MOREAU

Nobody can turn it off after this.
Not ever. Not before everything's
gone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Kazaklis turns rigid. He looks toward the flash screen.

KAZAKLIS

Look up henhouse.

MOREAU

No.

Kazaklis turns towards her. His voice turns raw with agony.

KAZAKLIS

It won't make any difference, Moreau.

MOREAU

I know.

KAZAKLIS

Nothing will change. Somebody else will do it.

MOREAU

I know.

KAZAKLIS

Cherepovets will go. Irkutsk will go. Ulan-Ude. Everything.

MOREAU

I know.

KAZAKLIS

New York. Coos Bay. Everything in between.

MOREAU

I know but I'm not going to do it. I can't.

KAZAKLIS

Can't?

MOREAU

Won't.

He turns away from her angrily.

MOREAU

They gave me too much time to think.

KAZAKLIS

You'd have turned a minuteman key in the first five minutes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MOREAU

Yes.

KAZAKLIS

Bitch. Damn you.

Kazaklis smashes his gloved fist over and over again into the flash screens.

KAZAKLIS

What do you want me to do? Shoot you? Eject you? Put you down on the ice?

Moreau just stares. Kazaklis reaches behind his seat for his flight bag, takes off his right glove and with the bag on his lap rummages around inside. He pulls out a small canister and snaps it open. It is a cyanide capsule. She takes it in her hand, starts to shift out of her seat to go downstairs. Kazaklis grabs her wrist, hard. The capsule pops loose and rolls across the floor.

KAZAKLIS

That's one PRP violation too many, Captain.

For a moment they are silent. Moreau poised halfway into the aisle way, Kazaklis staring straight ahead at the curtains.

MOREAU

So what's next?

KAZAKLIS

I dunno.

INT. B-52 -- NAVIGATOR'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

Tyler's face is grotesquely twisted with a look of brutal, raw anger. His hand is on the radio switch. It has been on private. He has been listening to the conversation upstairs. He turns his radio off. He looks over at Radnor to see if he has been seen. Radnor is a million miles away, lost in his own personal sadness.

EXT. TOP OF GORGE -- NIGHT

Sedgewick is being probed with a stick.

MOTHER (o.s.)

Doan do that.

Sedgewick opens his eyes, sees a little black boy with a stick retreating towards three figures. One holds a lantern which can be seen through the orange smoke.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOTHER

My son says you has the President
down in the hollow.

Gradually we SEE it is an immense black woman talking. She is
flanked by two sullen teenage sons. Sedgewick reaches towards her.

SEDGEWICK

God bless you for comin', ma'am.

MOTHER

Lord's not blessin' us very much for
anything today. Now what kind of
foolery you been tellin' my son?

SEDGEWICK

It's true, ma'am, the President was
en route to his command plane at
Andrews Air Force Base. We were
knocked down by the blast. You can
see pieces of our helicopter in the
trees.

MOTHER

Ya'all didn't get far, young man.
Fell down in Rocky Gorge.

SEDGEWICK

Ma'am, the President must get to a
military base, with radios and a
hospital. I can't exaggerate how
important it is.

MOTHER

Doan imagine you can exaggerate
anything today, mister.

Sedgewick hears thrashing behind him. He watches as the two teenage
boys carry the limp form of the President.

MOTHER

So that's the Man. Doan look so mean
now. Doan look so good either.

She pokes at him.

MOTHER

Alive. Always knew he was a tough
cuss. You boys carry these men over
to the hospital at Olney.

SEDGEWICK

Olney?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MOTHER

Hospital there. Least ways there was yesterday.

Sedgewick reaches up toward the woman grasping at her coat.

SEDGEWICK

FEMA? Out past Mucaster Road. FEMA. Please understand.

The Mother takes his hand and releases it from her coat.

MOTHER

I's not stupid, young man. I teach m'boys. I read the papers. You talkin' 'bout civil defense. Everybody in these parts knows the place. The Man ever wakes up you - tell him he can't keep a place secret if'n theys always poppin' radio aerials up 'n down out of ceement holes.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

KAZAKLIS

I gotta tell the men. Face to face.

Moreau nods. Kazaklis takes off his helmet but takes his radio headset with him. Kazaklis edges down the short walkway toward Halupalai, then plops down in O'Toole's old seat. Even before Kazaklis plugs in, Halupalai's eyes tell him the man knows. The eyes have a bleak look of failure.

KAZAKLIS

You done great, champ.

Kazaklis squeezes the gunner's arm, smiles, gropes for words.

KAZAKLIS

There was no purpose in it.

Halupalai's face softens. He tries to smile, nods. Then gestures for Kazaklis to tell the others. We can SEE the open hatch to the lower compartment just behind Halupalai.

INT. B-52 -- NAVIGATOR'S STATION -- CONTINUOUS

Kazaklis backs down the rungs of the hatch ladder. Radnor doesn't even notice. Tyler watches suspiciously. When Kazaklis reaches bottom and turns around he sees a kind of nightmare. O'Toole's body is discordantly wrapped around the bottom of the navigator's seats. The once neat desk top work stations are in jumbled disarray. Charts, blood, broken pencils.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Kazaklis looks at Tyler then pulls O'Toole back to his old resting place. Temporarily out of sight, Kazaklis leans his head against the bulkhead and rubs his eyes. Then he comes back between the two men, kneels and attaches his radio wire.

KAZAKLIS

Tough down here, huh guys?

He places a hand on each man's knee. Radnor is lifeless. Tyler flexes.

TYLER (menacing)

I am EWO ready.

He pushes Kazaklis' hand off his knee.

KAZAKLIS

I know you are. We all were. We've been EWO ready a long time.

Kazaklis looks compassionately at Tyler, then mistakenly at the photo of Tyler's child.

An elbow rips into Kazaklis' rib cage sending him backwards on his rump. His radio wire is still attached.

Tyler shields the photograph with one hand. With the other he pulls the radio wire out of its socket and wraps it once around Kazaklis' neck. He jerks and relaxes the radio wire on each tortured syllable.

TYLER

EEE...WOE...RED....DEE. Ready!
Ready! Now!

Kazaklis' head continues to bang on the floor as Tyler disintegrates.

TYLER

Twenty seconds...on the
racetrack...Cottonmouth...Radnor's
wife.

For the first time now Radnor turns expressionlessly to the scene. He makes no move.

TYLER

Coward! Coward! Coward!

Kazaklis jams a steel plated book into Tyler's shoulder. He jumps up and tries to grab Tyler. Kazaklis gets another elbow in the ribs. Kazaklis strikes quickly with a judo chop to the neck and Tyler slumps to the side.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Kazaklis takes a step back, the radio wire hangs from his neck like a loose noose. Radnor looks at him serenely. Kazaklis catches his breath for a moment then plugs his radio wire back in.

KAZAKLIS

We're not going, Radnor.

RADNOR

My wife was a cop, Commander. She protected us.

KAZAKLIS

I know she did, buddy. you should be proud of her.

RADNOR

Who protected her?

Radnor turns back toward his radar screen. Kazaklis tries to swallow a lump in his throat.

EXT. FEMA BUNKER -- MARYLAND -- NIGHT

In the smoky sketchy light from lanterns and flashlights we pass by what must be dozens of human bodies littering the ground. Children with most of their skin gone. A woman with a blasted-off limb, the bone still protruding. A stack of bodies. Many are blinded and stupified.

Sedgewick and the President are carried in makeshift stretchers by the black family through this eerily quiet setting. They approach a medic clad in a hooded radiation suit. He is doing what little he can. The Mother adjusts herself regally.

MOTHER

Sir, we has brought you the President of the United States.

The Hooded Man looks at them for a moment.

HOODED MAN

Sure thing, lady, and the Pope's knocking at the back door.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION

Kazaklis plops down into his seat. The atmosphere is quiet. He tapes down four fingers of his glove leaving the middle finger extended. He tapes the extended finger to the flight panel.

Moreau looks at him with concern. She turns over her shoulder to check on Halupalai who seems lost in the strains of a Sony Walkman tape.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOREAU

What happened down there?

KAZAKLIS

Tyler and I had a little failure to communicate.

MOREAU

(into the radio) Tyler, are you hurt?

TYLER (v.o.)

I Have no injuries, Captain. I am EWO ready. You are cowardice...

Moreau switches off the radio.

INT. FEMA BUNKER -- MARYLAND

A retired Brigadier General, the civil defense director of this bunker, stands off to the side as we SLOWLY REVEAL two nurses going over the President. Sedgewick lies next to him.

NURSE #1

Umm. Legs crushed. Do we have any ice?

NURSE #2

Good God, his eyes are gone. Severe retinal burn.

The President moans.

NURSE #2

Just relax, Mr. President. You'll feel better in a minute.

NURSE #1

What's with the I.V.?

NURSE #2

Lactated ringers. Two milligrams of morphine.

At the mention of morphine Sedgewick tries to come out of his fog.

NURSE #1

Let's give the poor man two more milligrams. Damn, I wish we had a doctor here.

Sedgewick sits up groggily and rips at the I.V. tubing in his arm. Nurse #2 comes over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEDGEWICK

No morphine!

NURSE #2

Hey, hey, hey. Calm down. You'll be okay, soldier.

SEDGEWICK

Sailor.

NURSE #2

OK. Sailor boy, take it easy.

PRESIDENT

(mumbles) Two aspirins and call me in the morning.

The Nurse laughs. Sedgewick floats back down on his gurney in frustration. He passes out.

INT. B-52 -- NAVIGATOR'S STATION

Radnor's back is turned from Tyler who is mumbling to himself. Radnor is looking in his alert bag as Tyler starts to yell at him.

TYLER

Why haven't you said anything, asshole. Don't you give a shit anymore?

Radnor turns around and smiles. He shows Tyler the little tin he has taken from his alert bag. Tyler tries to grab it.

TYLER

Give me that, you turd.

Radnor is too fast for him. He removes the white capsule and bites down on it before he swallows. Radnor's face is rapturous. Slowly his head slumps forward onto his desk top.

Tyler watches in stuporous wonder for a moment. Then he leans back for his own alert bag. He rummages inside, withdraws a .45 automatic, and makes sure the clip is full. He unhooks his radio set and moves toward the ladder.

On his radar screen, now unseen by Tyler, a squadron of incognitos edge in from a corner. They move in a few beats. Then remarkably, they begin to turn and head back the way they came.

INT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

One of our bombers turned, General.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alice swivels in his chair at the sound of the female officer.

ALICE

No.

OFFICER

I'm afraid so, sir. I checked the data three times.

ALICE

Who turned?

OFFICER

Polar Bear One aborted, sir. Turned southwesterly.

Alice does a half turn in his chair and stares at the map on the wall. The green dot at Cherepovets seems to glare at him.

MAJOR #1

We have to inform Condor, sir.

ALICE

Yes, I suppose we do.

INT. B-52 -- GUNNER'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

Halupalai listens blissfully to Don McLean singing "Bye, bye, Miss American Pie. Drove my Chevy to the levy but the levy was dry..." etc.

MOREAU

HA-LUP-A-LAI!!!

His eyes snap open. He looks towards Moreau. She is trying to get out of her seat. McLean sings, "This'll be the day that I die..." then he sees the shadowy figure of Tyler crouched inches away with his .45 held in outstretched arms.

Halupalai springs out of his seat. He shoves his shoulder into Tyler's kidneys and reaches around searching for the gun. He grabs the gun but Tyler won't let go. They fly backwards. They flail and roll in mortal combat. One of Halupalai's feet starts to go into the open hatch. He teeters, gives one last wrench at the handgun and careens backward into the steel seat braces. The gun kitters across the floor.

er is on all fours groping for the gun in the darkness. palai lets out a wild animal yell and fling himself at Tyler. tches him by the collar and pulls him with such strength that ung navigator flips backward in a half somersault through the vler crashes into the back of Halupalai's seat. Halupalai the gun. He starts back for Tyler who can see he's lost. desperate and cornered. He jumps in the seat and pulls action lever. With great force, he and the chair go through the roof of the aircraft.

EXT. SKY ABOVE B-52 -- NIGHT

Tyler comes shooting into the empty frame while still in the chair. He has no oxygen. Silence.

INT. B-52 -- VARIOUS STATIONS -- INFLIGHT

There is a CACOPHONOUS NOISE. With the instant change in pressure all loose items are sucked out through the hole in the aircraft. Halupalai's body sweeps up and out the hole. Charts, manuals, alert bags all go. O'Toole's body jams in the stairwell. All on-board water vaporizes creating a kind of diffused other-worldly lighting effect. Kazaklis' and Moreau's bodies strain against their harnesses. After a few moments they begin to experience the effects of hypoxia. There is a sense of well-being despite the danger. Kazaklis reaches for Moreau's thigh instead of his oxygen. They're both euphoric.

INT. LOOKING GLASS AND E-4 -- CONTINUOUS -- NIGHT

We should cross cut between the two sides of the conversation.

CONDOR

So Alice, what happens when one of your crews goes gutless?

ALICE

Sir, there's no precedent...

CONDOR

Screw precedence. No precedent for anything tonight.

ALICE

Normally, sir, we'd send up interceptors and try to bring them down.

CONDOR

Shoot 'em down?

ALICE

If necessary. We'd try to force them to land first.

CONDOR

Then you'd shoot 'em. What's the difference?

ALICE

Condor, I...

CONDOR

And stop callin' me Condor, dammit. This is your President speaking, not some dead bird.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE

Sir, ears are opening. They can mouse us, we can mouse them. We're getting the first bits of messages moving inside Russia.

CONDOR

Don't you think you should've told me about that?

ALICE

Sir, we can't make sense of it. All we can determine is they're rattled. Just as we are.

Alice feels someone at his elbow. He ignores it.

CONDOR

I'm gonna tell you something, Alice. The thing rattlin' me most is my own damn military geniuses.

ALICE

In this one, sir, there are no military geniuses.

The figure next to Alice tugs persistently at his sleeve.

ALICE

Excuse me a moment, sir.

Alice cups the phone then says to the female communications officer:

ALICE

For Christ sakes, Lieutenant, I'm talking to the President of the United States.

LIEUTENANT

He needs to know this, sir. The Bisons have turned. Shortly after Polar Bear One turned, the Soviet bomber squadron approaching them also turned.

ALICE

And the rest of them?

LIEUTENANT

Proceeding, sir. As before.

Alice pauses a moment and looks at the black phone in his hand.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

The wind has stopped but the light is stranger than ever. Moreau's face is haloed and shimmering, her eyes sparkling. Her lips are blue. Kazaklis leans towards her, touches her face. It is incredibly erotic. Suddenly she slumps unconscious towards him.

KAZAKLIS

Noooooooooo!

Frantically he grabs at his dangling oxygen mask. He takes three deep breaths from the mask. Quickly he places the mask over Moreau's face. She wobbles out of insensibility but now he's going again. He has trouble finding the radio button. Trouble talking.

KAZAKLIS

Get...on...your...own.

He shoves Moreau over into her seat. He breathes deeply. Slowly his senses return. Finally he turns to her.

KAZAKLIS

Moreau!

She has the mask clasped over her face. Kazaklis' sarcasm returns.

KAZAKLIS

Unseasonably cold, isn't it?

They begin to take the aircraft down to a lower altitude where they can breathe without oxygen.

INT. E-4 AND LOOKING GLASS PLANES -- INTERCUT

CONDOR

You know how I read this one, Alice? We got ourselves one deserter. They got a squadron. First time we've come out ahead on anything tonight.

ALICE

Sir, they could be signalling significant concessions. The squadron doesn't even have the range to make it back to Russia. Turn some more of our bombers, sir. See if they reciprocate.

CONDOR

Sounds like you want us to send smoke signals, Alice.

ALICE

If it helps to stabilize the current situation, sir. I believe any means of communication are appropriate.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONDOR

Look Alice, you don't understand what's going on here. We stop now, we lost. This President is gonna demonstrate that he has the capability and most of all the determination to wage a nuclear war until an acceptable outcome is achieved.

ALICE

Acceptable to who, sir?

CONDOR

Acceptable to me. Now put another bomber on the henhouse. Fast. Get that?

ALICE

I hear you, sir.

CONDOR

And send out general orders to whoever can hear us to shoot down Polar Bear One. No questions. Just shoot. Hear?

ALICE

I hear you, sir.

CONDOR

Don't sound very convinced, General.

ALICE

I don't believe I am, sir.

CONDOR

You tread careful, Alice, or you'll find yourself in deep shit.

ALICE

Yes, sir.

CONDOR

We can send out the orders from here.

ALICE

I suggest you do that, sir.

CONDOR

I hear you right, Alice?

ALICE

Yes, sir.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

There is a moment of silence. Then Condor hangs up the phone. It leaves Alice holding his phone listening to the buzz. We stay with him on the Looking Glass Plane.

MAJOR #1
They'll shoot you, General.

ALICE
Sam, old friend, I should find such
an angel of mercy.

INT. FEMA BUNKER -- RADIO ROOM

A Russian voice suddenly booms over the loudspeaker, jarring the American radio operator. He listens for a few seconds before clearing his voice.

RADIO MAN
This is Pit Stop Two. You will need
to speak in English.

He waves to a young WAC passing by his soundproof windows. She sticks her head in.

RADIO MAN
Get the boss. On the double.

The WAC starts to run.

RUSSIAN VOICE
Yes? Am I speaking to the alternate
command facility for FEMA? The
Federal Emergency Management Agency?

RADIO MAN
This is a priority channel. You are
required to identify yourself.

RUSSIAN VOICE
Certainly. I am Pyotr Krilenko,
attaché to the chairman of the
Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and
Premier of the Union of Soviet
Socialist Republics. The Premier
is with me and must speak to your
superior on a matter of utmost
importance.

INT. FEMA BUNKER -- SICK BAY -- MARYLAND

Nurse #1 and the Civil Defense Director stand watch over their esteemed guests. Sedgewick awakes in a panic. The clock reads 1815 ZULU.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He quickly turns towards the President. His heart sinks. The President lays on his back, an I.V. still in his arm. Sedgewick falls back in despair. Then a cool hand caresses his forehead.

NURSE #1

Easy. Easy. It's going to be all right now, sailor.

SEDGEWICK

Why? Why can't I make you understand.

NURSE #1

I do understand. No more morphine.

Sedgewick's eyes go to the President's I.V. tubes.

NURSE #1

Blood serum. Nothing else. He's going to hurt but he's going to think.

SEDGEWICK

God bless you. How long before he's coherent?

NURSE #1

Half hour. Forty-five minutes maybe. I'm sorry we screwed things up.

SEDGEWICK

Oh, honey, believe me, you aren't the ones who screwed up.

The young WAC from the radio room comes up to the Civil Defense Director who has been watching the scene. She whispers something in his ear and they leave the room hurriedly.

INT. FEMA -- RADIO ROOM -- MARYLAND

CIVIL DEFENSE DIRECTOR

We are at war, sir. Under no circumstances would I supply such information to you.

PREMIER (v.o.)

I repeat, sir, I am not seeking information. I know your E-4 aircraft is flying over Jonesboro in the state of Arkansas. I ask you once again, on behalf of all human kind, to assist me in making radio contact with that aircraft.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CIVIL DEFENSE DIRECTOR
I will not confirm the existence of
any aircraft.

PREMIER (v.o.)
You will not provide a radio patch
to the President, whom I know is
aboard the E-4 aircraft?

CIVIL DEFENSE DIRECTOR
(to radio operator) How could that
son of a bitch know that for sure?
I bet he wants me to confirm
locations so he can target the E-4.
(to the Premiere) I will not confirm
the existence of any aircraft.

PREMIER (v.o.)
Will you, for the sake of both our
nations, transmit a message to the
E-4 aircraft informing the President
that I wish to communicate with him
directly?

CIVIL DEFENSE DIRECTOR
Look, I don't know who you are. You
could be calling from Joe's Pizza
Parlor.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION

Moreau stares straight ahead for a few beats, shakes her head, then
unsnaps her oxygen mask.

KAZAKLIS
Feeling any better?

MOREAU
No. I've just been blaming myself
for a few things. Shoulda this,
should that, shoulda, shoulda,
shoulda.

KAZAKLIS
Hey, take it easy, pal.

MOREAU
Take it easy, bullshit. Everybody's
going bonkers.

Kazaklis softly places a hand on her shoulder.

MOREAU
Get your damn hands off of me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAZAKLIS

Hey, Moreau.

MOREAU

(turns to Kazaklis) I need you to help us make some decisions, Kazaklis. Play your God damn silly percentage baseball. (softly) Halupalai once told me there's a side of you I don't see.

Kazaklis peers around the side of his helmet peek-a-boo style.

KAZAKLIS

My backside, maybe?

Moreau lunges at him, her fists furiously pounding his shoulder.

MOREAU

Stop it. Damn you! Stop it!

Kazaklis takes it for a second then pushes her back.

KAZAKLIS

Fuel load?

MOREAU

Two hundred one thousand pounds

KAZAKLIS

Weapons load?

MOREAU

Just under twenty-thousand pounds.

KAZAKLIS

We have to jettison the weapons.

MOREAU

Yes.

EXT. B-52 -- VIEW FROM UNDERNEATH -- INFLIGHT

Bomb doors open and gravity bombs (unarmed) fall free towards the Gulf of Alaska.

KAZAKLIS (v.o.)

Where are we?

MOREAU (v.o.)

Navigation isn't our strong point. South of Anchorage. What was Anchorage.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOREAU (Cont'd)

We should be around the Kenai Peninsula with Kodiak Island coming up.

KAZAKLIS (v.o.)

Well ma'am, the way I figure it the world is your oyster. Which one of the islands did you have staked out on that map that drove the base commander nuts?

SCRAM missiles begin to pop harmlessly off the wings, the aircraft altering slightly with each disengagement. With the last of the SCRAMS gone the B-52 seems to rise.

MOREAU (v.o.)

Tahiti. Pretty pedestrian, I'm afraid.

KAZAKLIS (v.o.)

Hokay mutineers, Roratunga! Bora Bora! Hiva Oa! Papeete for the lady. We're going for the blue lagoon.

Moreau laughs in spite of herself.

INT. FEMA BUNKER -- MARYLAND

The President grumbles under his breath for a moment. Then sits straight up in bed.

PRESIDENT

Give me a hand, Sedgewick.

Sedgewick's hand gently pushes the President back in bed.

NURSE #1

Please take it easy, sir.

PRESIDENT

Connie?

The President's unseeing eyes blink open. He thinks for a moment and lucidity begins to return.

PRESIDENT

What time is it, Sedgewick?

SEDGEWICK

Eighteen twenty-five ZULU, sir. Twenty-five minutes after one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT

In the afternoon, Jesus H. Christ.
Where are we?

SEDGEWICK

In the FEMA bunker at Olney.

PRESIDENT

Who's with us?

SEDGEWICK

The Northeast regional director of
FEMA, two charming and wise nurses,
a radio operator and a half dozen
technicians.

PRESIDENT

That's it?

SEDGEWICK

That's it, sir.

PRESIDENT

What's the matter with me?

SEDGEWICK

You're blind, sir. Your legs are
broken.

PRESIDENT

Screw that, Sedgewick. I know that.
(he thinks of the nurses) Pardon
the language, ladies. What have you
got me on? My mind's dancin' all
over the place.

NURSE #2

Morphine, Mr. President. Sorry.
We thought it was best.

SEDGEWICK

Just keep talking, sir, and it'll
clear up. You sound pretty
clear-headed now.

PRESIDENT

So how come we're not all dead? What
the hell's going on out there?

SEDGEWICK

We don't have a good fix on it, sir.
Communications are coming back very
slowly. We're in a helluva mess.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CIVIL DEFENSE DIRECTOR
(too eager) Our preliminary data show it could have been much worse, sir. Most of the targets were military. A few cities were hit intentionally. But I'd say our fatalities are only about thirty million, surely no more than forty million.

PRESIDENT
Who the hell is that?

CIVIL DEFENSE DIRECTOR
Bascomb, Mr. President. Director Northeast region. FEMA. Retired Army. General officer...Brigadier.

PRESIDENT
No more than forty million. You find that acceptable, Mr. Director?

CIVIL DEFENSE DIRECTOR
My point, sir...

Sedgewick waves him off.

SEDGEWICK
It's horrible, Mr. President. It's also much more complicated. We've got a couple command planes up. We can hear one of them. The Looking Glass Plane.

PRESIDENT
What about the Soviets? What are they up to?

Sedgewick glances ruefully at the Civil Defense Director.

SEDGEWICK
I'm guessing, sir. From bits and pieces picked up on the radio here we think their bombers are still on the way. Our bombers must be nearing their targets. We know they held back more than half their ICBMs. There is absolutely nothing they can do to touch our submarines. I think they'll wait to see if there's another escalation. Certainly if our subs go, they'll hit us with everything they've got.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The President slowly brings his hand to his face and rubs his empty eyes.

SEDGEWICK

There's more, sir. The radio here received a most peculiar call from the Soviet Union an hour ago. The speaker claimed he was the Soviet Premier.

CIVIL DEFENSE DIRECTOR

I talked with him, sir. I'm sure he was an imposter. He wanted us to patch him through to the E-4.

PRESIDENT

The E-4? The E-4 went with my eyes back at Andrews Air Force Base.

Sedgewick looks at the Civil Defense Director who gulps.

SEDGEWICK

According to the director, an alternate E-4 made it out of Omaha and picked up a Presidential successor in Baton Rouge. The man is aboard the E-4 at this time.

PRESIDENT

What! A successor?

SEDGEWICK

Everyone thinks you're dead, sir. Including the Soviet Premier, if the call was authentic. I'm inclined to believe it was.

PRESIDENT

Is anybody going to tell me who the hell the new President is?

SEDGEWICK

The director believes that the Secretary of the Interior has been sworn into office and is aboard the E-4.

PRESIDENT

Jesus Christ.

No one says anything.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

PRESIDENT

Jesus H. Christ. We got Alice in one plane and the Mad Hatter in the other. Baskin?

CIVIL DEFENSE DIRECTOR

Bascomb, sir.

PRESIDENT

What makes you think you were not talking to the Premiere?

CIVIL DEFENSE DIRECTOR

He was too rude, sir. Far too rude for a national leader.

PRESIDENT

Rude? You want to see a national leader get rude? What did he say to you?

The Director blushes beet red and freezes.

SEDGEWICK

Oh, for God's sake. The Russian said the director couldn't find his ass with both hands and a hunting dog.

The Nurses titter nervously. Then the President starts to laugh.

PRESIDENT

Baskin, just off that information I'd bet you had the Soviet Premier on the phone. Try to get him back... Please.

The Director takes a deep breath.

PRESIDENT

Nurse, roll me into the radio room, will you, please?

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION

Kazaklis is looking at his watch. Moreau sees him. The flash screens are still up.

MOREAU

It's almost time for sunrise.

A few beats of silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAZAKLIS

Just thinking about it stops you in your tracks, doesn't it?

MOREAU

I don't know if I want to see it. It might promise too much.

KAZAKLIS

It promises you another day, Moreau. No more. No less. Be glad it's there. Be glad something's there we couldn't screw up. (beat) I'm glad it's there. I'm glad you're here...

Moreau fights a losing battle against tears. She reaches out and touches his arm. Then she clambers suddenly and awkwardly out of her seat. She wraps both arms around him and holds him tightly. They share the moment. Then she disengages.

MOREAU

I'm sorry.

KAZAKLIS

Why?

She looks at the flash screens then back at Kazaklis. Together they reach forward to draw back the curtains.

The scene is flawless. A few strands of cirrus clouds above them catch the first hints of day. On the right the sky remains a regal purple with stars still twinkling. On the left the sky is becoming a faint blue. Below them the ocean spreads outward in surreal ripples. Suddenly the orange arc of the sun peeps out of the sea. A magnificent miracle of a day.

INT. FEMA RADIO ROOM -- MARYLAND

The President's bed is angled up against the array of communications gear. Sedgewick listens from his bed by the door. The Director and the Radio Operator are also there.

PRESIDENT

No, Mr. Premier, most certainly not. I merely mean that my control over events is minimal. I need time to put my house in order.

PREMIER (v.o.)

This pretender, this other President, he has control?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT

I'm not certain anyone has control here.

PREMIER (v.o.)

His intentions are the same as yours?

PRESIDENT

Your weapons were very thorough in their destruction of our communications, Mr. Premier. So far I have not been able to talk to him.

PREMIER (v.o.)

I hoped he had been talking to me.

PRESIDENT

Sir?

PREMIER (v.o.)

You are aware that one of your bombers turned, and, in response, I turned a squadron of mine?

PRESIDENT

No, Mr. Premier. I did not know that. It is reassuring news.

PREMIER (v.o.)

Not really, Mr. President. The remainder of both our bomber fleets have pressed on. We have less than twenty minutes before the bombs start falling again. Millions more will die. But even that will be nothing compared to the awesome power of your submarines. They operate on a pre-programmed attack schedule?

PRESIDENT

That is correct.

PREMIER (v.o.)

How much time do we have?

PRESIDENT

I assure you, Mr. Premier. I would tell you if I knew. You must trust me. I do not know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PREMIER (v.o.)

(pause) I will trust your intentions. Your intentions might not be enough. You are well aware that I will not be able to control my forces if you are unable to control yours?

PRESIDENT

Well aware.

PREMIER (v.o.)

It is not a question of fault now, Mr. President. I will accept the fault and history's judgment of it. But men in foxholes will fire back at their own brothers. So will men in missile silos.

PRESIDENT

Yes, yes, I know that, Mr. Premier.

PREMIER (v.o.)

Destiny be with you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT

And God with you, Mr. Premier.

There is a lingering pause and then,

PREMIER (v.o.)

I am sorry, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT

I am sorry, too, Mr. Premier.

The President blindly hands the phone away. Sedgewick looks at the clock. 1900 ZULU.

INT. AIRCRAFT CARRIER BRIDGE -- SOUTH PACIFIC -- DAY

A young ENSIGN approaches the CAPTAIN who is drinking a cup of coffee. The Ensign snaps a salute.

ENSIGN

Sir!

CAPTAIN

Anything on that Soviet sub?

ENSIGN

No soundings, sir. We seem to have lost him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Ensign hands the Captain a message.

ENSIGN

We have an unidentified aircraft approaching, sir. It has a radar profile of a B-52.

The Captain stares at the Ensign a moment, his heart's not in it when he says:

CAPTAIN

Send up two F-18's.

INT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE -- SLEEPING QUARTERS -- INFLIGHT

Alice lies on a cot, one arm over his eyes.

LIEUTENANT

General?... General, excuse me, sir. The Civil Defense installation at Olney has made direct contact. They're on the radio now.

ALICE

Jee-suz Kee-rist, Lieutenant. Civil defense! Can't you keep those bureaucrats off my back? Tell 'em I'm taking a nap.

LIEUTENANT

Sir, it's the President.

ALICE

Condor?

LIEUTENANT

No, sir, the President.

ALICE

I don't understand?

LIEUTENANT

I don't understand either but I have the President on the radiophone. The President. He says it's urgent.

INT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE/FEMA RADIO ROOM -- INTERCUT

ALICE

Alice here.

PRESIDENT

This is the President speaking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE

Day word?

PRESIDENT

I don't think we have time for that, General.

ALICE

Listen, pal. I don't know what you are but give me the day word now or you'll find yourself alone in a phone booth.

PRESIDENT

(slight chuckle) Day word's Cottonmouth. Command word's Trinity and the action word is Jericho. Now you'll ask for the authenticator codes, right?

ALICE

Bet your ass, buddy.

Alice fingers his own card in front of him.

PRESIDENT

I don't have my authenticator card, Alice. It's lost and you either trust me or more than Jericho's walls will come tumbling down.

ALICE

Without that card you're a phony. I don't know who you are.

PRESIDENT

So what do we do now, General? You want to quiz me about the Brooklyn Dodgers? You want Betty Grable's measurements? Or is it Bo Derek this time around?

ALICE

We hang up. I won't talk to you. I'm disconnecting.

PRESIDENT

You hold on, General. This is the President of the United States calling you. Authenticator card or no authenticator card. We can play it by the book and blow the world to smithereens.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PRESIDENT (Cont'd)

That's what the book calls for. Is that where you want to go?

Alice says nothing, lights a cigarette.

PRESIDENT

I need a patch through to the E-4. I know you can talk to them. We can hear you but we can't reach them. I know the Secretary of the Interior is aboard. He thinks he's the President. I must talk to him. Fast. It's about the submarines. Do you understand?

ALICE

Where's your card?

PRESIDENT

Damned if I know. On the south lawn which I crawled across on my belly. In Nighthawk I which got knocked down in a gully with me in it.

ALICE

Without the card, the E-4 won't give you the time of day.

PRESIDENT

You let me worry about that, General. I'm asking you to patch me through. Will you do it?

Alice pulls himself up to a correct military posture. Looks for another cigarette and finds the pack empty. He crumples it and makes his decision.

ALICE

(to Sam) Sam, recall the bombers.

SAM

What?!

ALICE

You heard me.

SAM

Yes, sir.

ALICE

Mr. President, I will be happy to patch you directly to the E-4. However, I should brief you on a few matters first.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

KAZAKLIS

Whoo-e-e-e. Take a look at that.

Moreau leans across and looks out the port side windows. She sees a massive aircraft carrier that looks at this distance like a toy. There is a storm brewing behind the ship.

Suddenly the F-18s are on them, one off each wing tip. The fighter on Kazaklis' side tips his wings like kayak paddles. Kazaklis grins at the pilot.

KAZAKLIS

Uh oh. We got company. You like me, boy? Name's Kazaklis.

The pilot in F-18 #1 signals thumbs down.

MOREAU

These guys look serious, Kazaklis.

The F-18s fire into the emptiness in front of them.

KAZAKLIS

I'd say that boy is very serious.

The pilot in F-18 #2 gestures to his face mask.

MOREAU

He wants to talk to us. You think he wants to negotiate?

Kazaklis flips through the channels until he hears,

PILOT #2

Air Force Zero-Two-Six-Six-Four.

KAZAKLIS

That's us, pal. Our friends call us Polar Bear.

PILOT #2

O.K., smart-ass, our orders are to bring you down or shoot you down. Do you understand?

KAZAKLIS

I think we'll stay up. My friend here is afraid of sharks.

PILOT #2

Roger, Zero-Two-Six-Six-Four. You know what a Sidewinder will do to that crate of yours?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAZAKLIS

Save your heavy stuff for the bad guys, sailor. You know I got a lady in the right hand seat?

Moreau groans loudly.

KAZAKLIS

Puttin' all that lead in a lady might be hard to stomach, huh?

PILOT #2

Bring you down or shoot you down. Your choice, flyboy.

KAZAKLIS

O.K., sailor, we understand you havin' orders and all. I think you should know our navigator's dead, and our radar man's dead. So we can't see you comin'. Our EWO's dead so we can't send out decoys. Our gunner's dead so we can't shoot at you even if we could see you. Now why don't you just wheel around and pump a few rounds into us?... You want to say good-bye to the lady now?

A beat before the other F-18 pilot responds.

PILOT #1

We don't want to do this buddy.

Then in unison the two fighters peel off into their turns before returning for the kill. Kazaklis heads the B-52 directly into the storm.

INT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE/FEMA BUNKER -- INTERCUT

ALICE

Sir, I can turn the bombers but I cannot issue orders to submarines. The Air Force can't issue orders to the Navy. We can act as a relay, offer support, but not order.

SEDGEWICK

Sir, the Navy has two TACAMO planes for communicating with the subs. One's over the Atlantic; the other's over the Pacific.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE

They got off the ground but no one's been able to contact them yet. Anyway they'll only accept orders from the President or his successor. You don't have your authenticator card, Mr. President. The Secretary does.

PRESIDENT

Well, I'll just have to convince the Secretary to do it for us.

ALICE

I hope so, sir. You now have exactly one hour and twenty-eight minutes before those subs launch.

INT. AIRCRAFT CARRIER BRIDGE -- SOUTH PACIFIC -- DAY

KLAXONS are WAILING. LOUDSPEAKERS are BLARING the call to general quarters. The Ensign is there with the Captain.

ENSIGN

It's confirmed, sir. A victor class Soviet submarine.

CAPTAIN

How far?

ENSIGN

Five miles, on our tail.

The Captain looks away.

ENSIGN

Sir, is this it?

INT. E-4 -- PRESIDENTIAL COMPARTMENT -- INFLIGHT

The Fish and Wildlife Director is stretched out on the couch. The President is quietly reading the Bible. The Colonel sits in a chair fidgeting with a pencil. The phone lights and Condor picks it up.

CONDOR

Condor.

PRESIDENT (v.o.)

Good God, is that what they call you? I don't know if I'd stand for that, Mr. Secretary.

CONDOR

You're dead, Mr. President.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Colonel blanches and jumps out of his seat.

PRESIDENT (v.o.)

Like Mark Twain, Mr. Secretary, I'm afraid the reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated. I'm told, however, that you have done a superb job while I was incapacitated.

The Colonel hovers above Condor trying to grab the phone.

COLONEL JONES

Who the devil is it?

PRESIDENT (v.o.)

I'm not sure I would have been so cool myself. I congratulate you.

COLONEL JONES

What the hell is going on?

PRESIDENT (v.o.)

Now we have to work together on the next step, my old friend. The bombers are already turned but we haven't much time.

Uncertainty creeps into Condor's eyes. The Colonel's arm wrestles him for the phone.

CONDOR

Turned? (to Colonel) It's the President.

The Colonel stops wrestling, shakes his head, and smiles thinly in disdain.

PRESIDENT (v.o.)

We must stop those submarines, Mr. Secretary. It's going to take the two of us.

COLONEL JONES

This is the oldest trick in the book.

CONDOR

It sounds just like the President.

COLONEL JONES

A thousand Russians are trained to do that. Tape machines. Audio enhancers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PRESIDENT (v.o.)

We must send out the orders for a cease fire, Mr. Secretary. Then, together, we can begin to put what's left of our nation back together.

CONDOR

Who are you?

PRESIDENT (v.o.)

Mr. Secretary. I am the President of the United States and you know that very well.

COLONEL JONES

They can tell you your wife's maiden name, your favorite breakfast cereal. They're scared silly. They're trying everything.

PRESIDENT (v.o.)

Mr. Secretary I attended your granddaughter's baptism not three months ago. The child's name is Rachel. She has beautiful blond ringlets.

Condor looks up at the Colonel in anguish.

COLONEL JONES

Ask him for authenticator code confirmation.

Condor withdraws his card.

CONDOR

In the upper right hand corner of your Sealed Authenticator System Card read me the third, fourth and fifth letters and/or digits.

PRESIDENT (v.o.)

My card's lost, Mr. Secretary. That shouldn't surprise you. You were on the ground. It's not the first time a President's card has been missing. Reagan's was lost for two days when someone took a shot at him. I've been through far worse. Now I'm issuing you a direct command. Land that aircraft at the nearest available field.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CONDOR

You lose.

COLONEL JONES

Right!

CONDOR

You are a no good commie fraud.

PRESIDENT (v.o.)

You are making a monumental error,
Mr. Secretary.

CONDOR

Good-bye, comrade.

He hangs up the phone.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

Kazaklis and Moreau sit listening to the two pilots in the F-18s talking on their radios. They are getting closer to the storm.

PILOT #1 (v.o.)

O.K. Two, let's go for it.

PILOT #2 (v.o.)

Larry? Real shit duty, isn't it?

PILOT #1 (v.o.)

Everything's shit duty today, Red
Fox Two. Let's go in.

KAZAKLIS

Those guys are all heart. Hey,
Moreau? I wish I had come to know
you better.

MOREAU

My knickers, Kazaklis. You wish you
had known my knickers.

KAZAKLIS

Oh those, too. Pretty nice knickers
they were.

MOREAU

I seem to remember something about
better thighs on a Safeway fryer.

KAZAKLIS

Did I say that?

He pats her thigh.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KAZAKLIS

Feels like a triple A to me.

She removes his hand.

MOREAU

But attached to a real bitch, huh?

KAZAKLIS

Yeah, sometimes.

MOREAU

Yeah, most of the time.

PILOT #1 (v.o.)

One mile, Red Fox Two. Let's take it up and come down on 'em.

KAZAKLIS

Moreau?... I wasn't talking about your knickers.

MOREAU

Thanks, Kazaklis.

In front of them the storm clouds loom larger. Suddenly there is a very bright flash and a shudder ripples through the B-52.

PILOT #2 (v.o.)

Holy heaven.

PILOT #1 (v.o.)

Don't look at it!

PILOT #2 (v.o.)

But it...

PILOT #1 (v.o.)

Don't look!

The B-52 is in the clouds now. They can't see much of anything.

PILOT #1 (v.o.)

Red Fox Two. I'll take the first pass.

PILOT #2 (v.o.)

Break it off, Larry. It's finished.

The only response is static.

PILOT #2 (v.o.) (cont'd)

We knew our ship was gonna get it. It's finished now, Larry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

More static in response.

PILOT #2 (v.o.)
Let 'em go. Let somebody go for
God's sake.

There is more static from Pilot #1 until,

PILOT #1 (v.o.)
Red Fox Two. This is Red Fox One.
I'm going in.

PILOT #2 (v.o.)
Break away! Break away! Get off
'em, Larry.

PILOT #1 (v.o.)
Closing.

PILOT #2 (v.o.)
Please!

Through the radio din we HEAR a faint CHUG-A-CHUG-A. Kazaklis and Moreau hunch up. Nothing happens. Kazaklis and Moreau look at each other.

PILOT #2 (v.o.)
Eject! Damn you, Larry. Get out.
Hit it.

INT. E-4 -- PRESIDENTIAL COMPARTMENT -- INFLIGHT

HARPOON
Harpoon reporting, sir.

CONDOR
Admiral. We got ourselves a
situation here. Need a little more
info on our naval forces. Who is
authorized to issue new orders to
the submarines.

HARPOON
Only you can issue orders to the
submarines, sir. Through the TACAMO
planes.

CONDOR
What if someone else counterfeited
the codes so the orders seemed to
come from me?

HARPOON
I don't see how, sir.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONDOR

Your friend Alice seems pretty good at doing that with the Air Force.

HARPOON

Sir, I don't see...

CONDOR

(cutting him off) Never mind. What happens if the TACAMO planes get conflicting orders?

HARPOON

Sir, what's going on? Did Alice turn the B-52

CONDOR

Answer me, Harpoon.

HARPOON

What did the Russian bombers do?

Harpoon looks accusingly around the room. The silence speaks volumes.

HARPOON

The Russian bombers turned in response, didn't they? Sir, you can't even be considering the use of subs now.

CONDOR

Talk to me about conflicting orders, Harpoon.

HARPOON

The Soviets couldn't make their intentions clearer.

COLONEL JONES

And committed an incredible strategic blunder. It's now our subs against their remaining ICBMs. And our subs are a lot closer to them than their ICBMs are to us. Before they know what hit them it will be too late.

CONDOR

One more time, Admiral. What would happen if the TACAMO planes got conflicting orders?

HARPOON

Please, sir...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Condor motions to the Secret Service Agent who quickly backs Harpoon up against the bulkhead, jamming the barrel of his uzi submachine gun underneath Harpoon's chin.

CONDOR

Admiral?

Harpoon looks into the eyes of the Secret Serviceman and determines that he's capable of pulling the trigger.

HARPOON

If both commands had the proper codes the TACAMO planes would be confused. They would suspect that the Soviets had spoofed one set. They would proceed with the original orders for the subs to fire at 2100 ZULU.

CONDOR

That's all, Admiral. You're dismissed.

The Secret Serviceman removes his gun and backs off.

HARPOON

Sir, I...

CONDOR

Dismissed!

Condor turns his back on Harpoon. Harpoon looks humiliated and defeated. All eyes avert his. In desperation Harpoon lunges for Condor. Harpoon grabs him around the neck, trying to strangle the life out of the successor with every fiber in his body. Harpoon sees the Secret Service Agent cock his gun. Harpoon shouts. He has a maniacal gleam in his eye.

HARPOON

Shoot! Shoot! Please! Bring this plane down. Please shoot.

The Agent lowers his gun. Everyone seems paralyzed for a moment when suddenly an ornately tooled leather belt is whipped around Harpoon's neck. The belt twists hard, cutting off his airflow. WIDEN TO REVEAL the Fat Man from Baton Rouge as the initiator of this improvised yet effective rescue. For a few moments it is a test of wills but finally Harpoon is no match for the three hundred pounds of bulk. Harpoon loses his grip on Condor. His own face becomes distorted and suddenly he is gone.

INT. FEMA RADIO ROOM/INT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE -- INTERCUT

PRESIDENT

I couldn't order you to do that.

ALICE

Order me, sir? It was my idea.

PRESIDENT

There must be some other way.

ALICE

Mr. President, we have less than one hour before the subs will fire. I have serious doubts there is any way to stop it. But if we are able to reach the TACAMO planes, you can bet the E-4 will be able to reach them. If those planes get conflicting orders, the subs will stick with their original battleplan. It's that simple.

PRESIDENT

What do you think, Sedgewick?

SEDGEWICK

I'm afraid the General's right, Mr. President. However, to make anything work the General will have to read me the authenticator codes. Digit by digit. Letter by letter. That is extremely dangerous. We know the Soviets can probably hear the Looking Glass since they've got a couple of satellites functioning. If they pick up the codes, they'll have almost as much control over our weapons as you do, sir.

PRESIDENT

Yesterday that would have been high treason. Today it comes out to zero plus zero. I don't know what to say to you, General, except, thank you.

ALICE

Don't thank me, Mr. President. It's time to get on with it. We've lost some ground. It won't be as easy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT

Will you call me before you...uh...?

ALICE

Before I ram him?... Yes, of course,
I will, Mr. President.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

A single F-18 pulls up off Moreau's side. They look at each other.

PILOT #2 (v.o.)

Good luck, Polar Bear.

MOREAU

Why?

PILOT #2 (v.o.)

We had nowhere to go. Maybe you do.

MOREAU

Your carrier?

PILOT #2 (v.o.)

Just gone.

MOREAU

I'm sorry.

PILOT #2 (v.o.)

We knew it would go...I gotta leave
you now.

KAZAKLIS

Hey, buddy, why don't you tag along?

PILOT #2 (v.o.)

Negative, thanks. I got a buddy in
the drink back there.

KAZAKLIS

He made it?

PILOT #2 (v.o.)

Oh, yeah. I just whumped him a
little one. He got out. He's got
his raft open. I'll bet he's feeling
meaner than a barracuda right now,
too... Say, Polar Bear?

KAZAKLIS

Yeah, Red Fox?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PILOT #2 (v.o.)

When the two of us come paddlin' in,
you bring on the dancing girls.
Hear?

KAZAKLIS

You bet, Red Fox.

MOREAU

Luck!

The gleaming fighter peels off. The B-52 plows head on into the dark of the storm. It has begun to rain.

INT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE -- COCKPIT -- INFLIGHT

The screens are off but the aircraft is flying through smoke and crud. Alice stands behind Smitty the pilot. An ALARM is BUZZING.

ALICE

Turn that damn thing off. We don't
have to think about radiation alarms
anymore.

The pilot looks up.

SMITTY

You okay, General?

ALICE

You pre-empted me, Smitty. It's my
job to ask you that.

SMITTY

Oh I'm doing all right. You ever
think it would be this way, sir?

ALICE

Tell you the truth, Smitty, I don't
know what I thought.

SMITTY

No I guess none of us did.

ALICE

I'm very proud of you, old friend.
All of you people.

A few beats of silence.

ALICE

Where is the E-4 now, Smitty?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SMITTY

About a hundred miles away, sir.
North of Memphis.

ALICE

They'll spot us pretty soon.

SMITTY

Yes, sir. Figure it out, too.

EXT. E-4 -- NEAR MEMPHIS -- INFLIGHT -- DAY

The big plane banks around a big brown cloud of radioactive crud.

INT. E-4 -- COCKPIT -- INFLIGHT -- DAY

The flight crew here is showing signs of strain. Their flash screens are also off. As they come out of their turn, the pilot notices something on his radar.

E-4 PILOT

You know the higher these dirty clouds get, the harder it is to keep this aircraft out of 'em. Sheppard, double check the position of the Looking Glass.

SHEPPARD

Scarcely a hundred miles, and closing.

E-4 PILOT

Has everyone gone bananas? Why is Alice bringing that plane so near? Try 'em on the radio.

Sheppard tries on the radio for a few moments.

SHEPPARD

They're not responding, sir. Maybe they've got radio trouble?

The E-4 pilot thinks for a moment, then goes to the intercom.

INT. E-4 -- BRIEFING ROOM -- INFLIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

Colonel Jones sits alone studying maps. The INTERCOM BUZZES. We only hear his side of the conversation.

COLONEL JONES

Yes?... Tell me... Did you try to make radio contact? Jesus Christ! Evade him! Run for it!

He hangs up the phone.

INT. E-4 -- COCKPIT -- INFLIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

The pilot talks to his crew.

E-4 PILOT

Now that makes a lot of sense. I'll keep some distance between us. But I'm not going through any hot clouds to do it.

He banks the plane to the right.

INT. FEMA RADIO ROOM -- MARYLAND

Sedgewick, prone on his gurney, is alone with the Radio Operator. They are trying to reach the TACAMO planes.

RADIO OPERATOR

I'm sorry, sir. I'm getting nothing from the TACAMO planes.

SEDGEWICK

All right. Try the low frequency channels.

INT. E-4 -- BRIEFING ROOM -- INFLIGHT

Colonel Jones is addressing the communications staff plus the pilot. The Secret Serviceman with his submachine gun is also there.

COLONEL JONES

The Soviets' uncertainty has proved to be our opportunity. If we can reach the TACAMO planes, we can unload our subs with moral justification and without the condemnation of history. This exchange will alter the balance of power for centuries. Centuries!

We should sense some discomfort in the room. A sense these people feel the Colonel is getting a little carried away.

COLONEL JONES

The Looking Glass Plane must now be regarded as enemy aircraft manned by treasonous men.

He looks at the pilot.

COLONEL JONES

I want you to do everything in your power to put distance between us and them. No more avoiding radioactive clouds.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLONEL JONES (Cont'd)

The fate of the world is at stake.
Do you understand? O.K. Dismissed!

They begin to leave. The Colonel pulls aside the Secret Service Agent.

COLONEL JONES

Stay in the cockpit and make sure the pilot does everything he's supposed to do. To the letter. He let us get caught once already.

EXT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE AND E-4 -- INFLIGHT -- DAY

The Looking Glass Plane is within a mile of the E-4. The E-4 occasionally bobs and weaves through some dirty clouds. The Looking Glass follows turn for turn.

INT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE -- COCKPIT -- INFLIGHT

The E-4 is seen through the windshield. Alice is there with the flight crew.

SMITTY

They decided to take the rads, too. They've stopped ducking the clouds. Makes it tougher.

ALICE

It's more important now, Smitty.

SMITTY

You think we improved the odds?

ALICE

Yes. They're down to about 100 to one.

SMITTY

General, that's almost a shoo-in.

He nudges his throttles trying to pick up a few knots of air speed.

INT. B-52 -- GUNNER'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

Torrential rains flood through Halupalai's escape hatch. It shorts out the equipment back there in SIZZLES and snaps.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

Kazaklis is looking back toward the sparks. He turns around and shuts off some equipment. Some of his gauges are now dark, some sputter, some are lit but don't move.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Visibility is zero, with gale force winds. The aircraft belly flops on new air currents, groaning and shrieking in protest.

Kazaklis and Moreau act as one. They are cloned. They talk only when necessary. She sees something.

MOREAU

Fire in number three engine.

KAZAKLIS

Shut it down.

She does so with determination.

INT. E-4 -- COCKPIT -- INFLIGHT

The Secret Service Agent stands behind the flight crew, his weapon very much in evidence. The Pilot eyes him nervously.

E-4 PILOT

Don't you have a better place to be right now, young man?

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

No sir, I don't.

E-4 PILOT

Well how 'bout puttin' that weapon down someplace? There's no need for it in here.

The Secret Serviceman glares at the Pilot. The Pilot looks at his co-pilot who swallows. The hair on the back of his neck is beginning to tingle.

INT. E-4 -- RADIO ROOM AREA -- INFLIGHT

COLONEL JONES

Could they be jamming our attempts to reach the TACAMO planes?

E-4 RADIO OPERATOR

No sir, the Russians are not capable of jamming us but they can listen through their two Volna satellites over the Atlantic and Pacific.

Colonel Jones thinks for a moment.

COLONEL JONES

Atlantic and Pacific?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

E-4 RADIO OPERATOR

Yes, sir.

COLONEL JONES

That's it! That's it!

All eyes turn toward the Colonel. He glances at the clock: 2015 ZULU.

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

MOREAU

Fire in number four.

Kazaklis looks left, tries to see the nearest inboard engine through the streaks of water on the window.

KAZAKLIS

Shut it down.

MOREAU

Done.

KAZAKLIS

Rudder.

MOREAU

Got it.

The rear of the aircraft lurches. We HEAR RIPPLING METAL along with MOANING, CREAKING and WHEEZING.

KAZAKLIS

We're gonna lose the rudder and the stabilizer. We gotta get some altitude.

MOREAU

Thanks. Which way is up?

KAZAKLIS

Been askin' myself that all my life.

MOREAU

Very funny.

EXT. B-52 -- INFLIGHT

We SEE the B-52 come perilously close to the monster waves. One big one laps at the belly of the plane.

INT. E-4 -- RADIO ROOM -- INFLIGHT

The Colonel is rushing excitedly around the compartment, patting technicians' shoulders, shaking limp hands. No one shares his enthusiasm. He goes to the phone.

COLONEL JONES

Sir?

CONDOR (v.o.)

You interrupted my prayers, Colonel.

COLONEL JONES

I have the answer to your prayers, sir.

CONDOR (v.o.)

Didn't expect the answer by phone.

COLONEL JONES

Sir, I've reached the TACAMO planes. It's in the bag. You will have to come down with the authenticator card.

CONDOR (v.o.)

How in Lord's name did you do that?

COLONEL JONES

Straight through a couple of Soviet satellites, sir. We used the Russian communications equipment to contact our own Navy planes. How's that for shoving it to them?

CONDOR (v.o.)

Be right down, Colonel.

Colonel Jones cradles the phone for a minute then pushes the button for the cockpit.

PILOT (v.o.)

Pilot, here.

COLONEL JONES

Where the hell is Alice?

PILOT (v.o.)

Right on our tail, sir.

COLONEL JONES

Listen, you incompetent idiot. You keep that bastard off us for another fifteen minutes. I'm gonna win this war!

INT. B-52 -- PILOT'S STATION -- INFLIGHT

KAZAKLIS
We're not gonna make it.

MOREAU
Yes, we are.

KAZAKLIS
Prepare to eject.

MOREAU
I'm not ejecting, Kazaklis.

Far off in the distance Kazaklis sees some distant streaks of yellow. He heads in that direction.

INT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE COCKPIT/INT. FEMA RADIO ROOM -- 153

PRESIDENT
Alice, we've found a way through to the TACAMO planes; unfortunately someone on the E-4 came up with it first.

ALICE
Conflicting orders. It dooms us, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT
Perhaps. Perhaps not. It's in your lap, General. The E-4 got a locator message through. The TACAMO planes have asked for confirmation and codes. It'll take a few minutes to move the codes. Not many. Can you catch him in a few minutes?

Alice stares out the cockpit windows at the E-4 tail still a half mile distant.

PRESIDENT
General?

ALICE
I'm sorry, sir. It is impossible.

PRESIDENT
Try.

ALICE
Of course I'll try, sir.

PRESIDENT
What the hell time is it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE
2034, sir.

PRESIDENT
Call me back in two minutes -- 2036
on the nose. We're counting in
seconds now.

ALICE
Yes, sir. I know, sir.

The President hangs up.

ALICE
Smitty, I want you to burn out every
fan in those engines of yours. We've
got five minutes or it's all over.

INT. E-4 -- RADIO ROOM -- INFLIGHT

Condor enters. A young officer salutes and feels immediately embarrassed. Not only is it strange to salute a man in blue jeans and down vest but the formal rules are suspended here. No one else pays much attention. Colonel Jones escorts him to a telegraph operator.

COLONEL JONES
They don't want voice confirmation.
They want it on paper and in a
specific sequence or it will be
ignored.

CONDOR
O.K. Let's get started.

INT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE -- COCKPIT -- INFLIGHT

Alice is looking out the windows savoring a last cigarette. He looks at his watch -- 2036 ZULU. He picks up the phone.

PRESIDENT (v.o.)
General, I have the Premier on the
line. His people are monitoring the
transmission. You have three, maybe
four minutes. Can you do it in that
time?

ALICE
No, Mr. President, I cannot.

There is a long silence.

PRESIDENT (v.o.)
You understand what this means?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE

All too well, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT (v.o.)

It's hopeless?

ALICE

If I place myself in the cockpit of the E-4, sir, I see myself pursued by a madman. I see the President of the United States pursued by a madman, with only me between the two.

PRESIDENT (v.o.)

Madness takes many forms, General. I'm afraid I can see that more clearly now sightless, than I did with both eyes.

There is a silence for a few minutes.

PRESIDENT (v.o.)

General?

ALICE

Yes, sir?

PRESIDENT (v.o.)

Against your wishes I'm going to thank you. Not all our people programming was faulty.

INT. E-4 -- COCKPIT -- INFLIGHT

The pilot looks as though he has resolved something. He turns to look at the Secret Serviceman one more time. Then he turns back and grips the wheel tightly.

INT. E-4 -- RADIO ROOM -- INFLIGHT

Condor and Colonel Jones are supervising the tap-tap-a-tap of the codes when the plane suddenly banks hard left.

INT. LOOKING GLASS PLANE -- COCKPIT -- INFLIGHT

Out the cockpit windows we can SEE the E-4 turn broadside to the Looking Glass. Alice drops a match, grips the phone tighter.

Smitty puts the Looking Glass into a shallow banking dive to the left. Into the phone Alice says:

ALICE

Please do better next time, sir.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The windshield fills with the blue letters spelling UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

The screen goes to black as we HEAR rather than see the EXPLOSION. As the explosion sound fades we HEAR the beginning of TELETYPE SOUNDS.

NARRATOR

At twenty forty-one ZULU time Sedgewick's transmission reached the two TACAMO aircraft. At twenty forty-four the codes were completed, followed by these encrypted instructions from the President.

Across the black screen print out as a teletype would:

CEASE ALL HOSTILITIES IMMEDIATELY
MAINTAIN ALERT STATUS

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. B-52 -- INFLIGHT -- DAY

The B-52 comes at us, riding out of the storm. It breaks into the sunshine.

KAZAKLIS (v.o.)

Raratonga? Bora Bora? Hiva Oa?
Papeete for the lady? (he laughs)

MOREAU (v.o.)

Great Captain Shazam. So now what?

KAZAKLIS (v.o.)

I don't know, Moreau. Welcome to tomorrow.

As the B-52 goes past us.

FADE OUT.

THE END